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MR. MACDONALD left Washington on Wednesday in an atmosphere of optimism about the results of his visit. He and President Roosevelt, it is stated, find British and American opinion in close accord on a number of points—the reduction of tariffs, the raising of commodity prices, expansion of credit, and the re-establishment of an international monetary standard. All this, of course, is put in general terms; there is nothing as yet detailed or definite. The debt question is obviously a complicating factor, but on this also the news as we go to press looks hopeful. Mr. Roosevelt, we are told, is to ask Congress for power to grant a moratorium until after the World Economic Conference; which would mean that we were exempted from the June payment that Mr. Chamberlain has not budgeted for. The condition of a general moratorium, however, appears to be that France pays the instalment of last December on which she defaulted. This is now under discussion between the President and M. Herriot.

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The crux of the situation is the position of the dollar. Though Mr. Roosevelt is asking for autocratic powers of currency management, no one knows what he means to do with them. The pressure for the devaluation of the dollar is mainly internal and not external. Mr. Roosevelt is faced with something like a revolt of debtors. The problem is not that America cannot meet external claims, but that she needs to write down the grossly swollen volume of internal debt. The easiest way of doing this is by a decrease in the real value of the dollar. Therefore the question, which is discussed in our City page this week, is whether Mr. Roosevelt can postpone devaluation until after the World Economic Conference now announced for June 15th. If he can, there is a really hopeful prospect of international co-operation. If, however, the dollar is devaluated in the meantime the nations will again be at sixes and sevens.

Disarmament Prospects

There will be none to grudge, and many to applaud, the award of the Carnegie Peace Prize to Mr. Arthur Henderson. Nobody has, or could have, shown a more single-minded devotion to the cause of international peace than the President of the Disarmament Conference. And, despite the immense obstacles, we still hope he may steer the Conference to at least a partial success. Only the wildest optimist indeed could look for great results in the present state of the world; but it is possible that some measure of agreement will be reached which may put a check to a new and more frenzied competition in armaments. The British "draft convention" and a mass of amendments to it are now under discussion; it remains

to be seen whether something more solid than a reiteration of general principles will come out of it. Some hopes are built on President Roosevelt's favourable attitude, and France is no longer open to the old suspicion of crabbing all practicable schemes of disarmament. The real obstacles are, of course, Japan and Germany, and Germany is the more directly formidable. It is idle to minimise the danger, and if we or anyone else should try to do so, there is no chance that the French or the Poles or the Czechs will. The German delegates at Geneva, taking note of public opinion in the rest of the world, are on their best behaviour. But what is wanted is that the German Government—Herr Hitler and his friends—shall offer us some guarantee that they mean peace. Can they or will they do that?

Nazis and Jews

The drumming out of Jewish teachers in Germany goes ruthlessly on. A letter in the *Times* on Wednesday, signed by a number of distinguished academic names in Great Britain, calls attention to the case of one of these—Dr. Zondek, of the Spandau Hospital—and suggests that men of his quality ought to be assured of a refuge and an opportunity of pursuing their work in this country. So they ought, and we are glad that the agitation for finding posts for them here—difficult though that may be—is growing in strength. Dismissals, in some of the universities at any rate, are taking place *en masse*. At Kiel, we hear, the *Studentthum*, which is now a body legally recognised and clothed with considerable power, is demanding the ejection of no less than twenty-eight professors. And it threatens "the most drastic measures" on the part of the students against the "reluctant pedants." An incalculable loss will be inflicted on Germany—and on the larger world outside—by this insane proscription of men of intellect in science and art and literature. The proscription is the most tragic of its kind that our age has seen—for Germany used to be one of the centres of the culture of the world. In both Bolshevik Russia and Fascist Italy the victims were at least offered the choice of accepting the regime. In Germany the only question is whether their ancestors were Aryans.

Elections in Spain

Municipal elections were held in a large number of constituencies in Spain last Sunday, and the results show a substantial victory for the Opposition parties. But they can hardly be regarded as a shattering blow to the Government, still less as a triumph for Monarchism. The avowed Royalist candidates, like the Communists, had no success to speak of. Nor did partisans of the Government lose many seats which they had previously held. In nearly all cases Monarchist candidates had been returned two years ago at the fateful elections which were the prelude to the Revolution; and these have "stayed put"—with the important qualification that they are now supporters of the Republic, though opponents of Señor Azaña's policy. The Government's majority in Parliament is, of course, not affected, and it will go on with its job. The job of modernising, politically and economically, a country which is both backward and factious, is bound to be difficult. The new regime has weathered some storms, and it has considerable achievements to its credit. But its attempts at agrarian reform have not yet succeeded in winning the hearts of the great mass of conservative and illiterate peasantry.

The Open Door

Manchukuo, that independent State which the Powers refuse to recognise, is apparently about to repudiate the "open door" principle which has governed the trading relations of China with other countries. The "open door" in Manchuria was guaranteed by the Nine Power Treaty, to which Japan is a party. But Manchukuo is, of course, not a party to this treaty; and Japan claims that action taken by Manchukuo cannot be a violation of it, while the Japanese member of the Manchukuo Council remarks that Manchukuo cannot be expected to grant equal trading conditions to countries which persist in refusing recognition to the new State. Accordingly, despite the Nine Power Treaty, it appears that the Japanese are to be accorded a preferential position in Manchurian trade. No action has yet been taken officially, and it is to be presumed that there will be strong protests from the Western Powers against this closing of the door. It is, of course, ridiculous for the Japanese to pretend that they are not responsible for the proposal; Mr. Henry Pu-Yi and his ministers clearly did not think of it for themselves. It remains to be seen whether the Powers will act more effectively in checking Japanese commercial aggression than they have in stopping Japanese military conquest.

India and the White Paper

The White Paper, drafted with an eye to defeating Mr. Churchill rather than to conciliating Indian opinion, has had a very bad press in India. The most moderate opinion has expressed bitter disappointment with the proposals. But men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru have also recognised that it does, in spite of glaring defects, offer a great constitutional advance, and have agreed to take their place on the Joint Committee and to see what they can do to make a workable constitution. The gravest criticism, which must be met if the new constitution is to stand a chance, is that the White Paper avoids any mention of the Dominion status promised to India, and reads, indeed, as if it were a final document, the limit of British concession, instead of a stage in the march to freedom. The Indian delegates will certainly press for changes which will provide for an automatic advance towards Dominion status without the necessity of a further parliamentary struggle; they will work for the liberalisation of the proposed franchise and modification of the safeguards. Much depends on the way in which the present opportunity is used. Though Congress has once again held its illegal meeting and been dispersed with *lathis*, India is for the moment comparatively quiescent. Observers agree that the younger nationalists are deeply suspicious of British good faith, and that they can only be kept from violent courses if the new constitution clearly provides for a steady advance towards real Indian self-government. The British Government has a still more strenuous fight before it with the Diehards if the new constitution is not to be still-born.

The Russian Embargo

There is still no decision, as we write, on the petition for reprieve of Messrs. Thornton and Macdonald. No

doubt the action of the British Government in clapping on the trade embargo has again put the Russian backs up; but for this master-stroke of foolishness the two men would in all probability have been freed by now. It is to be hoped that no more threats or demands will issue from Downing Street, and that directly the case of Messrs. Thornton and Macdonald is disposed of, the embargo will be taken off and negotiations for the new trade agreement resumed. It is simply puerile to talk as though Anglo-Soviet trade did not matter—to us as well as to the Russians. That our imports from Russia have overtopped our exports to her is not an argument for abolishing commercial relations. It is an argument for increasing our exports. In the present state of employment in this country the Russian market is obviously of great importance, and British manufacturers, who do not want to see their business and the livelihood of their workers sacrificed to political prejudice, are stressing the mischief of the embargo. A volume of exported goods to the value of £9,000,000 or £10,000,000 is not a bagatelle. Have the politicians and scribes, who are so ready to cut off the British nose to spite the Bolshevik face, troubled to think how many men are employed in the production of these goods? Or do they ask us to believe that, if we do not sell a machine to Russia, it will find an immediate market in New Zealand or Peru?

Butter for Coal

The New British-Danish trade agreement was signed this week, and a similar agreement with Argentina is said to be nearly ready for signing. The agreement with Denmark, which is based on the most favoured nation clause, is likely to result in increased British exports to Denmark, which promises to take four-fifths of its coal imports from this country, as well as increased quantities of iron and steel, to facilitate the import of British motor-cars by a change in the system of taxation, and not to raise duties on a wide range of other goods. In return Great Britain guarantees to admit certain minimum quantities of Danish agricultural goods, mostly fixed on the basis of average imports during the past few years. The list includes bacon—a guaranteed percentage of total imports, not a fixed quantity—butter, cream, eggs and condensed milk. Hitherto Denmark has exported to Great Britain far more than she has bought of British goods. The present agreement will reduce the discrepancy, and this brings trade a stage nearer to a form of collective barter. The terms of the agreement are at least a sign that, within the limits set by the Ottawa agreements, Great Britain is prepared to come to terms with foreign countries for the admission of their produce.

The Slums of London

The Housing Committee of the London County Council was roundly attacked on Monday by Mr. Herbert Morrison, the leader of the Labour Party, for its remissness in dealing with the slum clearance problem. Mr. Morrison, we believe, was fully justified in his charges. An immense number of families in the richest city in the world are living in vile conditions. There are, as one speaker pointed out, 30,000 basement dwellings in London occupied by 100,000 people, and in the Borough of Southwark alone 40,000 out of a population of 184,000 are "indefensibly overcrowded." North, south, east and west, there are patches of slums, great and small. And it is no excuse for lack of zeal in getting rid of them to allege, as one member of the L.C.C. did, that fifty per cent. of slum dwellers live in the slums from choice. Even if that were true (which we take leave to doubt), there ought to be no such choice. Mr. Morrison demanded an immediate programme of slum clearance in accordance with the Minister of Health's recent circular. But the Housing Committee demurred to this; they ought not, they said, at this juncture to alarm owners of property, slum or otherwise. We hope that the London Labour Party, and every Londoner who wants a more decent London, will keep up the attack on the complacency of the L.C.C. Tories.

Mr. Justice McCardie

England has lost a very courageous Judge. There are of course objections to the habit of uttering *obiter dicta* from the bench, but the objections are not often expressed unless the Judge has unconventional views. Mr. Justice McCardie's pronouncements were not always wise, but he has done in the last few years more perhaps than any other one man to call attention to the obsolete nature of our laws in all matters relating to sex. He refused to be silent about the scientific and social effects of laws which, in common with most educated persons, he knew to be cruel in their effects and founded not on reason, but on tradition and prejudice. The issue was put most clearly in his famous quarrel with Lord Justice Scrutton, who said "Mr. Justice McCardie has referred to Judges with sociological knowledge. I think the less sociological knowledge is brought into the discussion of legal questions the better." We believe that Mr. Justice McCardie was right and Lord Justice Scrutton wrong. For the law is not really a static thing unrelated to the ideas and presuppositions of the age, and in a country where law is largely judge-made it would be easy to show historically that at every period legal administration had been in fact very strongly influenced by sociological considerations. Mr. Justice McCardie realised this and in one sphere at least resolutely attempted to be in tune with the living and not with the dead thought of his age.

The Uses of Advertisement

The increasing part played by the State in both external and internal trade is affecting the minds of advertising experts. Sir Charles Higham, the well-known advertising agent, has been advocating a Ministry of Publicity. He sees no reason why the Government should not use press advertising just as great business houses do—to create trade. Our hoardings would certainly be improved if more advertising could be printed and displayed as beautifully as that of the Empire Marketing Board. (We doubt by the way whether "'Buy Empire' by Telephone" can influence a single purchaser.) Mr. Saward, Chairman of the Education Committee of the Advertising Association, suggests that it should soon be possible for one of the Universities to set up a Faculty of Advertising. Remembering the dangers to academic standards involved in Professorships of Hotel Management and the like in some American Universities, we are chary of any proposal to use Universities for the specialised interests of commerce, but to establish courses in the study of advertising principles subordinate to the wider study of trade and commerce seems to us a useful and practical suggestion.

SMALL BEER

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S second Budget contained no sensations, and made no audacious new departures in the realm of finance. The beer-drinkers have the reward of much propaganda; the railway shareholders can rejoice at the tax on heavy motor-vehicles; the Co-operative Societies are to be taxed after all to please the private traders, though why and how they are to be taxed still remains obscure. The income-tax payer, who knew that a reduction in the standard rate of tax was out of the question on the principle of sound finance upheld by the Chancellor, gets at least a relief, in that the system of collecting three-quarters of the tax in January is to be abandoned, and the unpleasantness to be shared with the old impartiality between January and July. Sparkling wines, mechanical lighters, and other minor matters bring up the rear of a budget of small mercies and small innovations. Add that the Sinking Fund is suspended, as everyone knew it would be; that there is no provision for payment to the United States, though the Chancellor's words carefully did not exclude payment; that the Exchange Equalisation Fund is to be increased—perhaps in order to buy more gold for the Bank—and that the Budget is to be balanced; and you have all that matters in Mr. Chamberlain's statement of his financial intentions.

It could hardly have been otherwise. The estimates of the various departments were known in advance; and in the light of them it was clear that the Government proposed no new departure in the field of productive expenditure. There remained only the task of raising the required revenue, and of throwing such sops to important interests as to raise it with the least possible opposition in quarters on which the Government relies for support. It was never on the cards that Mr. Chamberlain would consent to an unbalanced Budget, or go farther towards lightening burdens than to suspend formally a Sinking Fund which it was beyond his power to maintain in practice. The order of the day was to mark time; Mr. Chamberlain and the country are therefore marking time.

There was only one condition on which the Budget could have differed materially from what it actually is. This was that the Government should have decided to reverse its policy of public retrenchment, and go in instead for a policy of wise productive spending. Had that been done, the Budget would have had to be fundamentally recast, and the expenditure divided into two parts, of which one could properly be charged to current revenue and the other met out of loans, on the ground that it represented productive spending designed to increase the volume of production and trade, and so to swell the yield of taxation in the future. But from the moment when the estimates of the various spending departments were made public, it was evident that the Government had not the smallest intention of making any new departure of this sort.

This wider issue having been ruled out in advance, there was little of major interest left for the Chancellor to determine, for there was no way open to him of raising the required revenue that could diverge materially from previous Snowden and Chamberlain Budgets. Consequently, Mr. Chamberlain's information about the past was more interesting than his proposals for the future. Last year's tax yields showed plainly enough how deeply, though gradually, the depression is eating into the taxable resources of the country, within the accepted canons of taxation, and that most of the existing forms of indirect taxation could only be raised at the expense of a tendency to diminish their yield. They showed also that there had been remarkable efficiency in tax-gathering, and that the British taxpayer retains his valuable quality of paying up, however he may grumble. They showed, much to Mr. Chamberlain's satisfaction, that the import duties imposed since 1931 have been remarkably efficient in keeping out imports, and consequently less efficient than he expected in raising revenue; but whether the public will share his enthusiasm at this result depends on their views about the world consequences of the policy of Economic Nationalism. Nor should it be overlooked that, despite the success of import duties in shutting off the British market from the machinations of foreigners, the revenue from Customs and Excise is now over £40,000,000 larger than the yield of income tax—a significant advance in forms of indirect taxation which obviously transfer to the poor a part of the burdens which a greater reliance on direct taxation would place upon the richer sections of the community.

That Mr. Chamberlain should have decided after all to tax the Co-operative Societies seems to us a blunder which will have serious repercussions. The tax, if it takes anything like the form suggested in the recent Report, has no foundation in principle, is not worth while from the standpoint of the yield it is likely to produce, and would never have been imposed at all but for the self-interested campaign of the private traders. It has the profound demerit that the Co-operative Societies can avoid it by paying out more in dividends and putting less to reserve—a clearly undesirable development. From the standpoint of the Government itself it is likely to do far more to antagonise the Co-operative Movement than to rouse any lasting enthusiasm among the private traders.

The taxation of heavy motor vehicles was expected as an outcome of the Salter Report, and is probably to the good as far as it goes. But it is to be hoped that it will not be mistaken for a settlement, or any substantial contribution towards a settlement, of the problem of road and rail. The settlement of that problem lies not in taxation, but in positive co-ordination of services under public control.

As for beer, it is just as well to have the penny off. We are neither "Drink More Beer" nor "Drink Less Beer" fanatics. We should object strongly to the reduction if it seemed likely to reduce greatly the yield of the tax; for there are other taxes which have, on social grounds, far better claims, and plenty of better ways of spending more money. Mr. Chamberlain might have remembered that the "cuts" were to be temporary, and he can scarcely escape the complaint that he has remembered the brewer and forgotten the unemployed. He could have reversed the policy of educational economy, or built more houses. But the Chancellor in this and other matters has preferred small beer.

Granting his own assumptions, Mr. Chamberlain had really very little choice. The big question, settled in the Government's mind long before the Budget was introduced, concerns the rightness or wrongness of these assumptions. In our view the Government ought to

have embarked on an ambitious policy of productive spending, which would have expanded employment both directly and indirectly, increased tax yields, and raised the level of prices. This policy ought to be financed mainly out of loans, and would, according to orthodox methods of accounting, involve an unbalanced Budget, For such a policy the whole Budget would have needed to be drastically recast, so as to divide capital expenditure from current costs of government. But the Government, long before Budget day, had decreed otherwise. Britain, Mr. Chamberlain seems to hold, cannot in the present condition of international affairs do much; let us wait for something, undefined and unimagined, to turn up, and hope that when it does the pedestrian ways of orthodox finance will leave us in a sounder position than other countries for taking advantage of new opportunities. But as for doing anything ourselves—to make things turn up—that is not within the scope of Mr. Chamberlain's imagination.

BLACK AND WHITE LAW

[In our issue of April 1st we commented on the fact that a Commission has been sent to inquire into the law and its administration in East Africa without having in its terms of reference any duty to inquire into native law. We have asked Mr. Driberg, who has been himself an administrator in East Africa and who has a long and intimate knowledge of its native peoples, to explain in this article what problems are involved in attempting to introduce English law into areas where the native peoples already have their own traditional systems.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

AN energetic Judge of the High Court went on circuit and reached Solot, then the Ultima Thule of civilised Uganda. A learned and humane judge, he little guessed how cataclysmic his visitation would be. Despite the fact that it was the dry season and the temperature was uncomfortably high, he took his seat in the "Courthouse" (a grandiose term for an insignificant mud building), fully bewigged, powdered, and caparisoned in flaming red. The prisoner was brought in—a wild Sabei, who till his arrest for a harmless, necessary homicide had never seen a white man. He gave one look at the judge, let loose a terrified yell, and fell into a dead faint. The judge was a humane man, fortunately for the Sabei, and did not take too legal a view of the crime of which the prisoner was accused.

This incident, trivial enough in itself, proved to be more than an episode in the drama of two conflicting cultures. For the Sabei, remitted by the discretion of the judge to the more merciful findings of tribal justice, had received such a shock that he confessed to the elders of his tribe a whole string of unsuspected malefactions far more heinous in their eyes than the act of homicide which he had committed as a moral duty. For not only had he never seen a white man—a term which meant little to him in any case—but he had never even dreamed that a being so preposterously garbed as the judge could possibly exist. The old fable of the white man being taken for a god dies hard, and is almost certainly false in nearly every case: but, god or no god, ancestor or no ancestor, this resplendent creature could not have been human, but one of the deathless ones who are the custodians of tribal morals and tribal rectitude. Or so it seemed to the Sabei, and he thought that it was about time that he confessed his sins, his real sins, that is, since the act for which the white man had so absurdly apprehended him was so little an offence that the deathless one could not have been sufficiently interested in it to appear in person at the seat of judgment.

There are several morals to this true cautionary tale, and the first is that there can be no abstract right or wrong, and that the laws of one community, therefore, may be at complete variance with the laws of another. This may be illustrated by innumerable instances. We have our game laws and we insist on protecting certain animals; strange as it may seem, many African tribes also have their game laws and from time to time they prohibit the hunting of animals liable to extinction. But as our game laws are framed on a "sporting" or economic basis, while theirs are based on the necessity to maintain their food supply, it does not necessarily follow that the same animals will be protected under each code. An African may by our laws, therefore, be required to assist in the destruction of a species which his own laws forbid him to pursue. The same conflict may occur, and often does occur, in every aspect of his social and economic life. The African's wider definition of incest—a crime often punishable by his laws with death—finds no recognition in our Courts, with a consequent loosening of the moral bonds which preserve his society. Other acts to which his social order may compel him are considered as serious offences by us, and he is forced either to break our laws or his own. It goes without saying that he prefers to break ours, which appear to him illogical, even when he knows that he is breaking them, and which are guaranteed by none of the sanctions which he recognises. Consequently, we are daily told that the African is lawless, because our laws seem to him irrelevant, and in order to make his lawlessness the more apparent our codes are so framed that, if he cannot be caught under one section, there is always an alternative which will trip him up.

It is not a matter, however, of this or that "offence," which may or may not be recognised as such. The conflict goes far deeper than that, as it involves the fundamental concept of what law is. European law is individual and negative; African law is collectivist and positive. It does not say "Thou shalt not," but "Thou shalt." It does not create offences, it does not make criminals; but it directs how individuals and communities should behave towards each other. Its whole object is to maintain an equilibrium, and the penalties of primitive law are directed not against specific infractions but to the restoration of this equilibrium. The law, that is to say, is always constructive and conservative. A crime consists in a disturbance of individual or communal equilibrium, and the law seeks to restore the pre-existing balance. That is why so often a thief goes unpunished. If theft is committed, material equilibrium has been impaired; but if restitution is made there is nothing left for the law to do. The deterrent or purely penal theory does not enter into primitive law. Even homicide is not punished from that point of view. A member of one group has been killed and its numbers have to that extent been lessened, with the result that equilibrium is disturbed. The law steps in to restore it either by the execution of the murderer or by the payment of compensation. The basic idea is the restoration of the lost equilibrium. That the murderer may be executed or that the property of his family may be diminished is incidental to this underlying motive, as the individual only exists in relation to the group of which he is a member. It is in no sense whatever penal; individuals may be vindictive, the community is rarely vindictive, the law never.

We have to clear away from our minds, then, our distinction between civil and criminal law. This distinction does not hold good in African societies, in which the law with its positive injunctions, acting as a constructive and reintegrating agent, does not tend to create criminals. All it does is to demand conformity to certain patterns of behaviour on the observance of which the well-being of the community depends. Only such behaviour as makes it impossible for the law to operate as a conservative force is considered definitely anti-social or, as we should say, criminal. For by anti-social is meant something much more than a disturbance of this or that equilibrium. It implies an act subversive of the whole fabric of society, an act which unpunished and unchecked would ultimately destroy the body politic. These anti-social crimes, which generally speaking comprise witchcraft, incest

and forms of sexual aberration (the last two being regarded as manifestations of witchcraft), cannot be dealt with by normal methods. This is not a question of equilibrium, as no particular individual or community is alone threatened or injured by the crime; its repercussions affect the whole body politic. The insidiousness of its operations and the illegitimate use which it makes of magic and the supernatural render the usual processes of law abortive. Primitive law, therefore, does the only thing possible and eliminates the menace, in order to conserve those conditions in which equilibrium can be maintained.

The instance with which we started also suggests that the sanctions of primitive law differ from those to which we are accustomed. With the African the judge is really an arbitrator, who has to decide solely on questions of fact. The law is universally understood and its principles are never in dispute. Once the facts are established reparation takes its normal course, unaided by the paraphernalia of courts, police, prisons, and all our civilised processes. These sanctions are unnecessary when the law is not penal. Conformity is secured by the fact that everyone is ready to acknowledge a law which has been evolved as an integral part of the social structure in which he lives. Self-interest, if nothing else, makes him anxious to observe its edicts, as a disturbance of the social equilibrium would involve him as well as the rest of his associates. A community of interest implies a common attitude, common obligations, and common rights as between all members of the community. Even if the individual should feel inclined to rebel his group insists on the law's observance; the community not only ensures the discipline of the individual, but makes itself responsible for the consequences of his errors, even to the extent of contributing to the reparation which his errors may involve.

This collectivist theory of law is one of its greatest safeguards; but it is the religious sanction which gives the law its ultimate authority. Every offence has to be both legally compensated and purged ceremonially. Ritual is inseparable from compensation and compels compensation, as the community lies under a religious ban till the sin is purged. The Church and the State are one; and this is not because there is any question of morality involved, but entirely because the past still continues in the present, because the dead ancestors, transmuted and deified, still partake in the continuity of the clan. Reparation satisfies the living, but without sacrifice and oblation the wrath of the gods is not appeased. It is this religious nexus which gives primitive law an authority sufficient to dispense with the mechanics of enforcement.

Enough has been said to show the nature of the conflict which must inevitably arise from the imposition of alien laws on primitive cultures. In one instance we have accepted the African doctrine of collective responsibility—the Collective Punishment Ordinance, designed to protect white interests against theft. Is it too much to suggest that a critical examination of African laws might make it possible for our codes to be so harmonised with their principles as to compel their respect, rather than their fear, and to give them justice rather than law?

J. H. DRIBERG

A LONDON DIARY

A CORRESPONDENT who has just had the opportunity of seeing both the French and the English systems at work strongly supports my remarks about the difference between the attitudes of the French and British authorities towards political refugees. While the British authorities carefully examine every foreigner and seem anxious to keep out German refugees, the French accord them a warm welcome even if they arrive without any identity papers at all. They have, in fact, instituted a snowball system by which a *carte d'identité* is issued to anyone who is sponsored by two people who already own a *carte d'identité*. One of the most remarkable of these refugees into France is Communist Deputy W. Münzenberg, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the W.I.R., which is the chief revolutionary organisation in Germany.

When the Reichstag fire occurred he was in his constituency of Offenbach in full electoral campaign. Hearing that he was to be immediately arrested he obtained a luxurious car—there is a dispute whether it was a Rolls-Royce or Hispano-Suizza—dressed up two comrades in livery, one as the chauffeur, the other as a footman, obtained a passport of somebody twenty-seven years younger than himself, and drove off to the nearest frontier. When the typical German frontier officials saw this comfortable car, with an obvious capitalist smoking a fat cigar in the cushions inside, they hardly glanced at his passport; they made a profound salute and allowed him to proceed on his journey. He was then able to return the passport to the original owner by the simple method of posting it.

* * *

Talking of *agents provocateurs*, I notice that the admirable efforts of the police to ensure public order have undergone no abatement during the last week. At Gloucester two women policemen, disguised as searchers after truth, interviewed a "fortune-teller" or "mental healer" about their little troubles and succeeded in paying 3*s.* 6*d.* for services rendered. The "mental healer" is now in prison. A Charing Cross Road bookseller was interviewed by an army officer, who said he could not rest comfortably before he procured an obscene work called the *Adventures of a Flea*. The bookseller refused to get the book, but after six visits had mercy on the gallant officer and procured the volume. The army officer was a policeman and the bookseller is now in quod. Quite apart from the public time and money wasted in these petty prosecutions, I should like to know how far the police may legally go in inciting other people to break the law.

* * *

Professor Kirkpatrick of the University of Minnesota has used the questionnaire method, so popular in the United States, to inquire into the attitudes and habits of radio listeners. The results of his inquiry, published in a pamphlet, are very interesting. The questionnaire was well designed; the sample of Minneapolis population which he got to answer it numbered nearly 500, was selected by taking the first and last name in the first and last column of each page of the Minneapolis telephone directory, and, when analysed, proved to have substantially the same age, sex, and class distribution as the whole population of Minneapolis. According to the answers, the average time which each person spent listening to the radio was 19.6 hours per week, the maximum for one person being 85 hours. The class which had the highest average was housewives, and "the evidence seems to suggest that radio listening is relatively unpopular among the persons who rank in the higher occupational groups." The most interesting results, perhaps, were obtained from the question asking which types of programme and which "radio personalities" the listeners particularly favoured and which they "tuned out in disgust." It is a curious fact that the answers seem to show that classical music is more popular in Minneapolis than jazz; the former comes well up in the list of popularity, while the bottom of the list reads: "advertising, religious sermons, crooners, political speeches, jazz music," in their order of increasing unpopularity. The table of personalities is remarkable, but I feel some sympathy for Edna W. Hopper, who finds herself pilloried at the bottom of the list with only one favourable mention and fifty-one "mentions of tuning out in disgust." Advertising, which plays such a prominent part in the American broadcasting system, seems to be extremely unpopular with listeners.

* * *

For boldness in prophecy I commend the *Times*' statement that in regard to the Budget Sir Herbet Samuel "is expected to take a non-committal attitude."

* * *

The headline above the account of the Moscow trial in the *Daily Express*, April 18th, was *Soviet Prosecution Talks of*

"*The Blood of Vengeance*." Vishinsky's words, as quoted below this headline, were:

> In your verdict you must remember that the Soviet Government does not seek the blood of vengeance . . .

So is public opinion manufactured.

* * *

The Bishop of Exeter has explained in the *Exeter Diocesan Gazette* why he dislikes the idea of establishing what he calls a clinic to

> encourage that terrible race suicide which has already reduced France to comparative impotence and now threatens our beloved country . . .
>
> If we turn from religion to science we find that, according to the great Darwinian theory, the whole evolution of the world has been accomplished by the survival of the fittest. Few Englishmen would deny that their own race was the fittest, but even a foreigner would have to allow that if it was not the fittest it was at least one of the fittest.

* * *

A correspondent sends me the following "howlers" from a secondary school.

> A mormon is a male mermaid.
>
> A duet is a duel between females.
>
> The widow's mite refers to a poor widow in the New Testament, who, having no money, put her child in the collection.
>
> Dante's *Inferno* was inspired by his life with Beatrice.

CRITIC

MARRIAGE

"CONVENTIONAL people," says Mr. Bertrand Russell, "like to pretend that difficulties in regard to marriage are a new thing." I could not help wondering, as I read this sentence, where one can meet these conventional people who think, or pretend to think, as conventional people do. I have known hundreds of conventional people, and I cannot remember one of them who thought the things conventional people seem to think. They were all, for example, convinced that marriage was a state beset with difficulties, and that these difficulties were as old, if not as the hills, at least as the day on which Adam lost a rib and gained a wife. A younger generation of conventional people has grown up in recent years, and it may be that they have a rosier conception of marriage than their ancestors; but the conventional people of the Victorian era were under no illusions on the subject. Their cynical attitude to marriage may be gathered from the enthusiastic reception they gave to *Punch's* advice to those about to marry—"Don't."

I doubt, indeed, whether the horrors of marriage were ever depicted more cruelly than during the conventional nineteenth century. The comic papers and music-halls made the miseries of marriage a standing dish. "You can always tell whether a man's married or single from the way he's dressed," said the comedian, "Look at the single man: no buttons on his shirt. Look at the married man: no shirt." The humour was crude; but it went home to the honest Victorian heart. If marriage were to be judged by the songs conventional people used to sing about it in the music-halls, it would seem a hell mainly populated by twins and leech-like mothers-in-law. The rare experiences of Darby and Joan were, it is true, occasionally hymned, reducing strong men smelling strongly of alcohol to reverent silence; but, on the whole, the audience felt more normal when a comedian came out with an anti-marital refrain such as:

> O why did I leave my little back room
> In Bloomsbury,
> Where I could live on a pound a week
> In luxury
> (I forget the next line).
> But, since I have married Maria,
> I've jumped out of the frying-pan
> Into the blooming fire.

No difficulties? Why, the very nigger-minstrels of my boyhood used to open their performance with a chorus which began:

> Married! Married! O pity those who're married.
> Those who go and take a wife must be very green.

It is possible that the comedians exaggerated, and that Victorian wives were not all viragos with pokers, who beat their tipsy husbands for staying out too late. But at least they and their audiences refrained from painting marriage as an inevitable Paradise. Even the clergy would go no farther than to say that marriages were *made* in Heaven. That they did not believe that marriages necessarily ended there is shown by the fact that one of them wrote a "best-seller" bearing the title, *How to be Happy Though Married*.

I doubt, indeed, whether common opinion in any age has ever looked on marriage as an untroubled Paradise. I consulted a dictionary of quotations on the subject and discovered that few of the opinions quoted were rose-coloured. These opinions, it may be objected, are the opinions of unconventional people, but it is also true that they are opinions treasured and kept alive by conventional people. We have the reputed saying of the henpecked Socrates, for example, when asked whether it was better to marry or not: "Whichever you do, you will repent." We have Montaigne writing: "It happens as one sees in cages. The birds outside despair of ever getting in; those inside are equally desirous of getting out." Bacon is no more pro-nuptial with his caustic quotation: "He was reputed one of the wise men that made answer to the question when a man should marry: 'A young man not yet; an elder man not at all.'" Burton is far from encouraging! "One was never married, and that's his hell; another is, and that's his plague." Pepys scribbled in his diary: "Strange to say what delight we married people have to see these poor folk decoyed into our condition."

The pious Jeremy Taylor was as keenly aware that marriage is not all bliss. "Marriage," he declared, "hath in it less of beauty and more of safety than the single life—it hath more care but less danger; it is more merry and more sad; it is fuller of sorrows and fuller of joys." The sentimental and optimistic Steele can do no better than: "The marriage state, with and without the affection suitable to it, is the completest image of Heaven and Hell we are capable of receiving in this life."

Rousseau denied that a perfect marriage had ever been known. "I have often thought," he wrote, "that if only one could prolong the joy of love in marriage we should have paradise on earth. That is a thing which has never been seen hitherto." Dr. Johnson is not quoted in the dictionary; but everyone will remember how, devoted husband though he was, he denied that the state of marriage was natural to man. "Sir," he declared, "it is so far from being natural for a man and woman to live in a state of marriage that we find all the motives which they have for remaining in that connection and the restraints which civilised society imposes to prevent separation are hardly sufficient to keep them together." When we come to the Victorian Age we find the greatest writer of the period putting into the mouth of Tony Weller a sentence packed with pessimism about marriage: "Ven you're a married man, Samivel," says Tony, "you'll understand a good many things as you don't understand now; but vether it is worth while goin' through so much to learn so little, as the charity boy said ven he got to the end of the alphabet, is a matter of taste." And did not a later Victorian, Robert Louis Stevenson, much derided nowadays for the "obviousness" of his thought, warn the world from the heights of his young bachelorhood that: "marriage is a field of battle and not a bed of roses"?

When one reads the things that have been said about marriage from one generation to another, one cannot but be amazed at the courage with which the young go on marrying. Almost everybody, conventional and unconventional, seems to have painted the troubles of marriage in the darkest colours. So pessimistic were the conventional novelists of the nineteenth century about marriage that they seldom dared to prolong their stories beyond the wedding bells. Married people in plays and novels are seldom enviable, and, as time goes on, they seem to get more and more miserable. Even conventional people nowadays enjoy the story of a thoroughly unhappy marriage. It is only fair to say, however, that in modern

times we like to imagine that nearly everybody, single as well as married, is unhappy. As social reformers we are all for happiness, but as thinkers and aesthetes we are on the side of misery.

The truth is that we are a difficulty-conscious generation. Whether or not we make life even more difficult than it would otherwise be by constantly talking about our difficulties I do not know. I sometimes suspect that half our difficulties are imaginary and that if we kept quiet about them they would disappear. Is it quite certain that the ostrich by burying his head in the sand never escapes his pursuers? I look forward to the day when a great naturalist will discover that it is to this practice that the ostrich owes his survival.

Y. Y.

BAN AND BLESSING

The ban on such journals as the Manchester Guardian *and the* NEW STATESMAN AND NATION *remains in force.*—Times, *April 24th.*

Hitler, it makes me sad to see
That, if the *Times* report be true,
You find so much less fun in me
Than I—and others—find in you.

Can my poor efforts to amuse
Deserve this stately indignation?
Or has my colleagues' thirst for news
Laid the NEW STATESMAN AND THE NATION

Beneath the ban? Did you suppose
No Jew would recognise the dint
Of your tame bravos' cowardly blows
Unless he read of them in print?

Or did you, ostrich-like, believe
That you had found a means of freeing you
From all the scorn your pranks receive,
Because you would not see us seeing you?

The loss is yours—your Nazis' eyes
My scurril rhymes may never light on;
But, till all sense of humour dies,
Their deeds are left for me to write on.

Like Balaam, whom you'd curse is blest—
Your ban itself must mirth provoke;
And you'll remain my favourite jest
Though you refuse to see the joke.

MACFLECKNOE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ARCHITECTURE

NEARLY all of us call ourselves functionalists nowadays; but I often wonder if we are all quite clear as to the significance of that term, or as to the limitations of its applicability. In so far as a building fails to fulfil its utilitarian purpose it falls by that much short of perfection. But when we have created a building which adequately satisfies all "practical" demands, devoid of all hindrance or superfluity—in other words, is "functionally" perfect—have we necessarily achieved architectural success? I put this question to two highly intelligent modernists who recently honoured me by week-ending at my house. One answered with a decisive "yes"; the other temporised. He admitted that, of two buildings equally fulfilling their utilitarian purpose, one might be much more architecturally satisfying than the other—which seemed to me to give away the whole case for "functionalist" absolutism.

It is that "something more" which intrigues me—a mere amateur in these matters. Even the crudest of theoretic functionalists fail to express their admiration of those rows of modern villa residences for artisans which border so many station roads in England. Yet many of these houses closely correspond with the ambitions, social notions and domestic demands of 90 per cent. of the people who occupy them. Hundreds of these humble villas are quite devoid of "useless ornament," of decoration added to meet conventional or traditional superstitions—in fact, of anything which is not strictly "functional." The bolder and more thorough-going of my guests, when I advanced this instance, stuck to his guns, arguing that if, as alleged, these buildings met the practical needs of their occupants, they were architecturally beyond criticism. My other guest agreed with me that they are hideous and ought to be exploded by dynamite. The former, a hot Socialist, urged that, in any case, the look of a building was no business of the passer-by, that all this talk about beauty as distinct from utility was sheer bunk, and that the so-called aesthetic sense was "as purely a matter of local fashion and convention as are women's dress and religious ritual." I pointed out that it is a little difficult, if there is no such thing in animal nature as an aesthetic sense, to account for the springtime manifestations of the peacock's tail, the lapwing's crest, or the plumage of the pheasant. As I anticipated, my friend explained to me that these had obvious physiological or biological utility in that they suitably excited the emotions of the females of the several species concerned. When I rejoindered that this emotional stimulus seemed to imply the existence of something uncommonly like aesthetic sense in the ladies concerned, the discussion became the prey of red-herrings.

It is surely the experience of everyone with any degree of sensitiveness that of two objects equally fitted for their objective purpose one is more pleasant to look at, and usually at the same time more stimulating, than the other. This applies to the most varied things—jugs and tea-pots and chairs and rooms and houses and theatres. It is "this little something extra some others haven't got" that calls for consideration and analysis. The extreme "modernist" often argues, as my guest argued, that this supplemental element is the fruit of mere prejudice or faulty education—just a convention that needs correcting to meet new circumstances and new developments of the practicable. The conservative prejudices of some of our architectural diehards, and the architectural affectations of our raw mediocracy, would seem to justify such a contention; but a glance at the contents of the bookcases of the latter should give us pause. For there we find a corresponding insincerity, a corresponding affectation of taste. These books—like the meaningless gables or pillars of the houses which contain them—are but potentially beautiful objects out of place. The books were bought for the same reason as the gables and pillars were built: because they have been praised by persons of acknowledged sensitiveness and discrimination. We do not condemn the works of Blake because they are to be found in the homes of many a sordid money-grabber or half-wit; and argue that, because the stories of Gaboriau or of Edgar Wallace would most appropriately occupy those shelves, these should rightly be looked upon as the only honest embodiments of literature. Obvious inappropriateness and obvious insincerity are rightly regarded as contemptible; but it is the shallowest logic that drives some people to infer therefrom that the things and tastes affected are themselves so much footle. New circumstances demand new forms, it is true; and that to-day new circumstances exist is equally true. But, in its main manifestations, and in its psychic equipment, humanity is very much what it has been for many thousand years. The same stock of senses and emotions remain—though their most effective provocants may have changed. The discoveries of steam, of the internal-combustion engine, and of steel have indeed produced important revolutions in human environment, but they have only in the smallest measure changed the spiritual and aesthetic nature of man.

If we are honest most of us will admit that we like a home to look homely; a room to look lived in; a cathedral to inspire

awe and reverence; a hall devoted to the arts to suggest our nobler dreams of human potentialities. Our whole mental and emotional life works with symbols and analogies. Any art which is to be more than sensual in its appeal—probably even that also—must be symbolic. There is prevalent, especially in intellectual circles, a notion that science represents the last word in human knowledge and intelligence. In truth, science is a mere tool, no more human, and of no more human relevance, than is the steam engine or the automobile. Its very inhumanity is one of its prime postulates and one of its proud boasts. Science is cold, humanity is warm. In so far as a building is utilitarian (in the crude sense), it is the business of the engineer and the builder, the scientist and the craftsman. In so far as it is to contribute to human happiness something over and above that which the strictly "scientific" building can offer, it is the business of the symbolist, the artist, the architect. Surely everybody now realises that above the level of elementary sensation all is flux and interblending. Every emotion is deeply tinged by intellectual processes; every thought contains an element of emotion. This is mere commonplace. Yet plenty of persons with minds of good repute still argue that the aesthetic emotions (if their existence is allowed at all) are most pure when they are unstirred by thought, by memory, or by association. This passion for sterility is a new thing in the world, and it manifests itself in unexpected places. The detachedness, orderliness and mathematical precision of the laboratory are taken as the indices of reality and of spiritual clarity. But life is not at all like that; nor is beauty, nor is art. In all these is an ingredient not measurable by instruments of precision; and it is that ingredient which gives the savour to our existence.

If the extreme functionalist position is accepted, architecture as a fine art disappears. Indeed, there is no longer room for the architect; for the engineer and the technical builder can between them meet the whole of the difficulties. That a building, like a piece of literature, should serve the purposes for which it was intended, efficiently and, in the truest sense, economically, is, of course, beyond dispute; but everything depends on the interpretation we give to that word "purpose." No man can see or feel beyond the range of his own mind; and there are millions of people on this earth to whom Shakespeare's sonnets must appear a ridiculously affected way of conveying information. Yet, in the ultimate analysis, such is the first and most important function of literature. But the information conveyed by the sonnets differs from that which the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Herald* so effectively present. Incidentally, it is probable that it could not be presented by words otherwise than as it is. Architecture is to be considered and criticised from much the same standpoint as is literature. Many people pay visits to cathedrals, derelict castles, and the like simply because the guide-books tell them that they ought to. We may be pretty sure that every time they miss the architectural point. If they are rich enough to build a new house for themselves they commonly have in mind something resembling, even on a miniature scale, the highly recommended buildings they have visited—hence the thousands of pseudo-Gothic and pseudo-Elizabethan villa residences all over the country. The reasons why the castles, or cathedrals, or cottages, are (so they are told, and readily believe) admirable examples of applied art entirely escape them. The relativity of beauty is a notion foreign to them. Yet, when we see suburban villas, with their quaint apings of baronial grandeur ("bijou baronial halls," as one enterprising agent describes them), it is not the buildings which merit our criticism so much as the inferiority complex of those whose minds and morals they embody. It is the unused "best parlour" over again—a terrible give-away, which should stir our pity rather than our scorn. If we look a little deeper we shall be driven to see that these aesthetic perversions, as they seem to us, are but inevitable fruits of our social system. It is as foolish and as heartless to denounce the taste of the *petit bourgeois* as to ridicule the poverty of the proletariat.

HARRY ROBERTS

Correspondence

JEWS AND GERMAN SCIENCE

SIR,—In view of the decree which excludes all members of the Jewish race from holding public employment in Germany it is time that the world realised how much damage Hitlerism is doing to the great tradition of German science, and to ask what possibilities for enriching their own scientific life this decree opens up to countries which are willing to offer hospitality to German exiles.

In no country have Jews contributed more to science than in Germany. In all fields of scientific research they have left their mark with discoveries of outstanding merit. Eight Nobel Prize winners in Germany are Jews. Hardly an institute or university exists in which they do not play a leading role in their respective sciences.

Whilst Einstein is undoubtedly the most celebrated Jewish scientist in Germany to-day, partly because of his achievements and partly owing to his courageous stand in renouncing his German citizenship and academic associations, many other Jews have achieved distinction in the fields of applied and mathematical physics. To Hertz we owe the fundamental discovery of the Hertsian or wireless waves, which Marconi applied to its present commercial uses. Franck, of Gottingen, a Nobel Prizeman who has resigned his chair as a protest against the treatment received by his racial colleagues, is world-famous for his researches on the structure of the atom. This savant, in spite of the fact that the Nazi Government has seen fit to "consider" the cases of Jews who have served in the Great War, or have lost a father or son in the conflict, has declined to take advantage of the opportunity which would enable him to continue to direct the Institute erected in his honour with the funds of the Rockefeller Foundation.

In the field of chemistry two men deserve special mention. Haber, a Nobel Prizeman, discovered a process for the fixation of atmospheric nitrogen which saved the early breakdown of Germany in the world war. This was impending because of her inability to obtain sufficient nitrates from Chili with which to manufacture high explosives. The Haber process in times of peace provides Germany with sufficient ammonia to fertilise her arable soil. Willstäter is famed for his classical researches on the constitution of enzymes, the chemical substances which enable all living cells to carry on their vital processes.

Physiology owes much to Otto Warburg, whose researches on the respiration of living cells have led him to elucidate the fundamental differences in the living processes of cancer cells and normal body tissues. The work of Zondek on the female sex hormones (the all-important chemicals secreted in the body which govern sex characters, growth, and other important functions) has given the world a test for pregnancy which is now in daily use in every corner of the globe.

Such an imposing list of contributors to human knowledge might well be sufficient for a minority race, but it is in the field of medical science that German Jews have made their greatest contributions.

Who can estimate the debt of mankind to Ehrlich, the discoverer of salvarsan? The disease of syphilis, which at one time was rampant in Europe, has been practically wiped out of existence by the use of this drug and the application of the test discovered by Wasserman and now named after him. Weichselbaum, Morgenroth, Neisser, Sachs, Braun—names famous in the annals of medical research, whose contributions to bacteriology are excelled by none—are only representative examples of a group of men whose work served to attract to Germany students from all other countries.

Little wonder that even the Nazis hesitate. Most of the older men, men who have already made outstanding contributions to knowledge, may be suffered to remain in Germany if they choose to take advantage of the war service concession. What of those who have not served in the war? Practically every European country to-day contains refugees from German laboratories, driven out into a world in which each country finds its own unemployment difficulties so overwhelming that there is little hope that they will be allowed to remain. The British Government has relaxed the regulations controlling the entrance of Jews into Palestine. Will the Hebrew University of Jerusalem seize its opportunity and equip itself with scientists whose achievements have entitled them to the respect of the whole scientific world? Or will these men be compelled to relinquish their training and

ideals and take up other occupations in order that they may live? Rumour has it that the Spanish Republic has opened its doors to these exiles. Certain it is that Einstein has been invited to occupy a Chair in Spain. It would, indeed, be fit recompense if this country which drove the Jews from its shores should invite them back three hundred years later.

Finally, one wonders whether a Germany in which rights no longer exist, and in which freedom of scientific thought and facilities for work are governed by a brutal political machine, deserves the support of great scientific philanthropic institutions which have done so much in recent years to further the cause of international scientific research. ENGLISH SCIENTIST

THE MOSCOW TRIAL

SIR,—Now that the proceedings in the recent Moscow trial have become the subject of an economic war between Britain and Russia which may well develop into an even more serious situation, it is necessary to form a judgment as to the merits of the case. In this connection I should like to draw attention to the following facts, all of which can be substantiated from reports of the Court proceedings.

It is suggested that the admissions made by MacDonald and Thornton in the course of the preliminary G.P.U. investigation were extorted by day after day of "mental torture" which broke down their powers of resistance. Actually, however, Thornton wrote his first confessions on March 13th, the day after his arrest; while MacDonald wrote his first admission of guilt on March 12th, the day of his arrest.

It is also suggested that on Thursday, April 13th, the second day of the Court proceedings, MacDonald made a complete retraction of his plea of guilty; that a 20-minutes' adjournment was then hurriedly arranged, during which the G.P.U. guards took him away and exposed him to some form of pressure; and that, having once more been "broken," he was at once put up to repeat his full confession. Against this should be set the following facts:

(1) MacDonald did not repudiate his testimony as a whole, but only the statement that he had had direct illegal dealings with Sokolov. A few minutes later he explained that his dealings had been with Sokolov's superior Gusev, who had passed on the tasks to Sokolov; and he made this statement actually before the 20-minutes' interval.

(2) A short adjournment was taken at a convenient point in every session of the Court. Actually in this case it came at the conclusion of Sokolov's main examination; and the main examination of MacDonald came next, in accordance with the prearranged order decided at the opening of the trial. Naturally, therefore, his admissions came rapidly after the interval.

(3) None of the English newspaper correspondents at the trial (with the one exception of the *Daily Telegraph*) reported anything suspicious about the circumstances of the adjournment. All the sinister suggestions in Saturday's newspapers were the result of the Foreign Office summary.

With regard to Thornton's statement of March 13th admitting military espionage for the British Intelligence Service, and involving practically all his British colleagues, it is important to observe that the prosecution itself by implication admitted that it was a "spoof" confession. Why, then, was it made? Why was MacDonald's name almost the only one *not* included in the list? And why, when Thornton was released on bail on April 4th, did he tell the British Embassy that he had not made such a confession (see Second White Paper, No. 24)?

12a Parliament Hill Mansions, N.W.5. DONALD BARBER

SIR,—The very sane article in your issue of April 22nd on the Moscow Trial omits all reference to a very important event which to some extent accounts for the undiplomatically excited tone of the British White Papers, by conveying the atmosphere in which all these things happened. The British engineers were arrested by the Ogpu on the night of Saturday, March 11th. The Soviet Foreign Office were unable to inform the British Embassy until late on the night of Monday, March 13th, or on March 14th with what these men were charged, where they were, and whether there would be a public trial or a secret police inquiry.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, March 12th, there appeared in *Isvestia*, over the signature of Menzhinski, the President of the Ogpu, a report by the Collegium of the Ogpu that on the previous day, March 11th, they had examined the question of seventy-five Civil Servants, officials of the People's Commissariat for Agriculture and State Farms who were charged, most of whom had confessed, and who were found guilty of counter-revolutionary agricultural sabotage, in that they had destroyed the tractor and agricultural machines, purposely mixed weeds with the grain, set fire to the machine and tractor-stations, and disorganised the work of sowing, the harvest and the threshing in order to undermine the economic basis of the peasantry and to bring about starvation on the land. Thirty-five activist participants of the counter-revolutionary criminal organisation were condemned to the highest measure of social defence, that is, to be shot. Forty others were condemned to imprisonment for ten or eight years. The report ends "Sentence has been carried out."

I think that you will perhaps agree that this power which the Ogpu has inherited from the old Tsarist Ochrana, of secret and most summary trial, sentence and execution, all within a few hours and for all we know within a few minutes, if not "peculiarly" awful is nevertheless truly "awful."

6 Phené Street, S.W.3. L. L'ESTRANGE MALONE

SAFE ROADS FOR ALL!

SIR,—Your Motoring Correspondent, while deploring the enormous toll of the roads, which by the end of the year will total two million killed and injured since the war, about half a million being children under fifteen years of age, seems to dismiss airily any proposals for putting an end to this colossal national scandal. He appears to think that the Road Traffic Act consists of increased penalties for offending motorists, but actually it is a fairly comprehensive attempt to regulate road traffic and contains many excellent provisions. Unhappily it has failed to reduce road accidents, despite a reduction in the number of licensed vehicles since the Act came into operation, and its failure, in the view of many people who have studied the question, is due to the fact that the Act also abolished the speed limit for light cars. His suggestion that the enforcement of penalties against erring motorists has failed to enlist the support of public opinion is surely not true. Many magistrates have been lamentably weak in administering the law, but as the Master of Balliol recently said, "What I do not think officials and departments realise is how much resentment there is amongst people who have to hide it or have no power to express it. I have heard working people speak about the state of things on the road with a bitterness which, I think, would quite astonish people who have no time or opportunity to mix with ordinary people about their work."

Your Motoring Correspondent says, "No tyro takes the road without seeking prolonged instruction at expert hands." That your Correspondent can make such a statement shows how much he is out of touch with the facts. As to the value of tests, the experience of America is illuminating. Some States have tests and some have not. But in those States which have adopted tests there were immediately 29 per cent. fewer fatalities than would have been anticipated on the basis of the national trend.

The Pedestrians' Association, T. C. FOLEY,
Graham House, 3 Tudor Street, E.C.4. Secretary

LABOUR'S OPPORTUNITY

SIR,—I was away when "Ex-Labour M.P.'s" reply to my article appeared, and I did not see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of April 15th until too late to answer his letter in your issue of last week. May I assure your correspondent that I do not consider, as he seems to suppose I do, reform in internal organisation of the Labour Party is the be-all and end-all of making it an effective force for the attainment of Socialism? I agree that policy rather than organisation is the fundamental matter, and that the one thing needful is to get the party to follow a really Socialist policy and go to the electors with a really Socialist propaganda and agitation.

But I was concerned to point out that, whereas the party conference did, last October, advance a long way towards a plain declaration of its Socialist will and intentions, there has been no reflection of this decision in the subsequent propaganda directed from Transport House, or in most of the utterances of the official spokesmen of the party. I set out to inquire why this discrepancy existed, and how it could be removed, and the party thus equipped to face the country with a programme corresponding to the evident will of the delegates at last year's Conference. This led me to discuss points of organisation, and to propose changes designed to make the party machine a truer reflection of the will of the active members up and down the country. For it is unhappily evident that it is of little use to get even the most advanced pro-

grammes adopted at the Labour Party Conference if the resolutions there passed achieve no effect at all upon the day-to-day propaganda conducted by the party machine, or upon the attitude of the leaders. I want the policy adopted at Leicester last October carried into effect; and this seems to me to involve changes in organisation.

But perhaps your correspondent and I differ about what the policy of the Labour Party ought to be. I am certainly no devotee of Parliamentarism, nor do I regard Parliament as an instrument at all well adapted for carrying the change to a Socialist system into effect. But I am convinced that, if sufficient backing is to be secured for Socialism to give Socialists any chance of putting their policy into practice in the near future, the appeal to the electors must be made in terms of parliamentary action, and a real and sincere attempt must be made to adapt the parliamentary machine to the task of Socialist construction, at any rate in the earlier stages of the transition. For the very last thing people in this country want (including Socialists) is a violent revolution; and, while they may be fully prepared to fight if Anti-Socialists resort to violence in order to prevent the coming of Socialism by constitutional means, the vast majority of the manual workers, as well as of other classes, will be not attracted, but decisively repelled, by any Socialist propaganda that sets out to advocate the winning of Socialism by violent means initiated from the workers' side.

I agree with your correspondent in desiring the Labour Party to put itself actively at the head of the unemployed, to lead a crusade against Fascism and war, and to seize, instead of funking, opportunities to make matters difficult for the "National" Government and the capitalist system. But what chance is there of any of these things being done without large changes in the organisation and leadership of the party? G. D. H. COLE

THE PHOENIX SOCIETY

SIR,—Differences of opinion within a trade are seldom suitable for public discussion, but in the case of the sale of books both authors and the rest of the reading public are interested parties; and Mr. Hubert Wilson's letter in your issue of April 22nd, written (presumably) on behalf of the London Branch of the Booksellers' Association, contains statements and implications likely to mislead them. We hope, therefore, that you will allow us to comment on some of them as shortly as possible.

The implied distinction between this company and "booksellers proper" is fallacious, and we doubt if Mr. Wilson has examined our complete list. So far from confining ourselves to the sale of "the cream of the market" or even to "those classics for which there is a permanent demand," we include, as you know, Sir, a considerable number of works not normally stocked by the average bookseller. In fact we should say, with due modesty, that our catalogue has a range and variety seldom equalled by that of any other general bookseller not depending upon publishers' announcements to bear some of the cost of his list. Except that the bulk of it is done on long credit terms, our business is strictly comparable with that of other booksellers. We have a showroom in which any one may see the titles stocked, and ninety per cent. of those titles are ordinary editions available to the whole trade. The implied suggestion that we should do better (as a matter of business principle) to confine ourselves to "specially bound sets of expensive books" is one that can probably be judged by your readers—especially by those who have had experience of such trading. It would appear that the less regular our methods as booksellers the better Mr. Wilson would like us.

We seem to be blamed for giving "credit without security," whilst according to Mr. Wilson himself "an uncomfortably large part of every bookseller's capital is tied up in credit accounts which, especially in these days, often run a great deal longer than any book company would put up with"—presumably with adequate security! But Mr. Wilson himself must know that our selling terms do not leave us unsecured.

The fact is that as a company we can hardly avoid benefiting the book trade even if we wished to do otherwise, which, of course, we do not. We distribute, as part of our routine, very large quantities of material advertising books obtainable from the trade generally, and receive indisputable evidence that one result is to send buyers to bookshops; and we should have hoped that Mr. Wilson as an official of the trade association bent upon increasing the sale of its goods—if not as a bookseller himself—would have extended at least a benevolent toleration to a not ineffective worker in the same field. JOHN BAKER,

The Phoenix Book Company Limited. Manager

SAMUEL PEPYS

SIR,—May I beg a little space to answer the accusation in the last line of your notice of my "Shorthand Letters of Samuel Pepys"?

Although your reviewer is vague as to the "commonly stated inaccuracies" that I am alleged to have repeated, in a letter to the *Times* of February 23rd, 1933, he was more explicit, and from that I learn my inaccuracies consist in stating (*a*) that Shelton was a pioneer, (*b*) that the date of the first edition of *Tachygraphy* is 1641. To both of these I adhere. The Century Dictionary defines a pioneer as "a first or early explorer or experimenter in any department of human enterprise." The first known edition of *Tachygraphy* is dated 1641 and even if it were entered in the Stationers' Register in 1638, does this prove anything? I find in the Short Title Catalogue that many books were registered before the date of the first known edition. From this two things might be inferred: either that there has been a wholesale destruction of first editions; or, that books were entered in MS. before publication, in the same way that to-day a patent is taken out before beginning the manufacture of an article. To me, the latter seems the more likely alternative and so I shall persist in thinking that the first edition in question was in 1641, until some convincing contradictory evidence is discovered. EDWIN CHAPPELL

41 Westcombe Park Road,
Blackheath, S.E.3.

THE STAGE SOCIETY

SIR,—In view of the friendly interest taken by the press in the Incorporated Stage Society it was felt that a brief statement of its present policy would be welcome. The Council has recently been re-formed, and one of its first works must be to establish finances on such firm ground that a crisis such as that of a few years ago, when dissolution seemed unavoidable, cannot possibly occur again. In the thirty-four years of its existence the Society has given the drama a service which has been proved as valuable as it is unique. Suggestions have been made that its work is done, but while the drama still lives so long will the Society be necessary as a pioneer. While the Society lives the drama cannot die. They are implicit in one another. That the value of its activities are widely realised is shown by the widespread dismay caused by the threat of its dissolution. Protests were made against an action which in the public's opinion must have such a disastrous effect on the future of the theatre, since no other organisation is completely independent of the box office principle and can afford to choose a play *simply on its merits as a work of art*.

It is impossible and undesirable that the Society's work should be carried on from hand to mouth without the guarantee of financial security. We have therefore agreed to act as a committee of an Endowment Fund to raise a sufficient sum to place the Society beyond the anxieties of fluctuating membership. To this end a campaign will be inaugurated in the next few weeks and the money raised vested in the hands of trustees, the interest only being used to provide the necessities of the Society's life.

The Committee has every confidence, in view of the splendid work done by the Stage Society in the past, that help will not be lacking to ensure its continuance in the future. Campaign offices have been opened at 32 Shaftesbury Avenue, where any inquiries respecting the Endowment Fund should be addressed.

CLIFFORD BAX,	MARIE NEY,
LILIAN BAYLISS,	OLIVIER,
LILIAN BRAITHWAITE,	NIGEL PLAYFAIR,
MAURICE BROWNE,	MURIEL PRATT,
ELSIE COHEN,	J. B. PRIESTLEY,
GWEN FFRANGCON DAVIES,	LANDON RONALD,
BASIL DEAN,	WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN,
JOHN DRINKWATER,	JOHNSTONE FORBES-ROBERTSON,
JOHN GIELGUD,	R. C. SHERRIFF,
J. T. GREIN,	WILFRID STEPHENSON,
ISOBEL JEANS,	GODFREY TEARLE,
J. MARTIN HARVEY,	SYBIL THORNDIKE,
CEDRIC HARDWICKE,	HUGH WALPOLE,
EDWARD G. HEMMERDE,	GERALD WELLESLEY,
HOLFORD KNIGHT,	H. G. WELLS,
EDITH LYTTLETON,	FREDERICK WHEELAN,
LILLAH MCCARTHY,	HUMBERT WOOLFE,
RAYMOND MASSEY,	ETHEL SNOWDEN, *Chairman*,
EDWARD MARSH,	W. S. KENNEDY, *Vice-Chairman*,
GILBERT MURRAY,	HOWARD DE WALDEN, *Treasurer*

The Incorporated Stage Society, 32 Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1.

Miscellany

THE NAZI LOOKS AT ART

[Mr. Brian Howard guarantees the following conversation as an accurate record of an interview which took place during August of last year at the Brown House, Munich, between himself and Dr. Haufstaengl, press chief and social secretary to Hitler. Our own correspondent in Berlin reports a very similar conversation with Dr. Haufstaengl. Our correspondent asked, "Can you give me an indication of Hitler's economic policy?" Dr. Haufstaengl replied, "Oh, it is all quite simple. Everything will be all right when we have turned the Jews out of Europe and the niggers out of France. If the French won't do it for themselves we shall have to do it for them."—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

MYSELF: Now, Herr Doktor, to speak frankly, you realise that Herr Hitler is considered abroad, at least, as principally a military figure. It is hard for us to think of him as taking any real interest in Germany as regards art, for example.

DR. H.: I, Mr. Howard, have been with Hitler for ten years. Do you suppose I could live as long as that with a stupid man? Why, I play him the *Gretchen am Spinnrad* of Schubert on the piano—frequently. Almost every day. And he enjoys it very much.

MYSELF: But does he talk about these things?

DR. H.: No. He refuses to talk about anything. Particularly at the moment.

MYSELF: Never talks?

DR. H.: Well, sometimes he talks about music and architecture. He is not literary, only artistic.

MYSELF: What?

DR. H.: He is interested in a great many things that mere army officers are not. Remember that. Do you know the Guinnesses?

MYSELF: Yes, I like some of them. Dr. Haufstaengl, what modern literary work do you consider embodies the Nazi ideal most representatively?

DR. H.: *Peer Gynt*. It is the greatest thing written since *Faust*. It is blond. Spengler knows. Houston Chamberlain knew. Germanic.

MYSELF: I see. I want to ask you rather a delicate question, now. Why this hatred of Jews?

DR. H.: Jews? Jews! Because they've never produced anything at all. Because they made the English and American theatres into sewers. Ours, too. All women and nakedness. Look at Reinhardt. Muck (where I put the word "muck" Dr. Haufstaengl must be understood to have used the word "scheiss"). Moissi, muck. Martin Luther said that the Jews were all right so long as they were frightened. Frightened. It's true. Besides, they aren't blond. Not Germanic. They are not *Germans*. They have never produced anything except *muck*.

MYSELF: Well, Herr Doktor, what is the Nazi opinion of Thomas Mann? He's not a Jew.

DR. H.: Muck. Darling of the Jews. I'm delighted he wrote during the last fourteen years in Germany. It just shows.

MYSELF: But he is considered——

DR. H.: Possibly. The little great man. Always feels it his duty to churn out a new masterpiece ever so often in order to be a greater little man. I myself, you know, Mr. Howard, agree with that hero of Huysmans. I read anything. One astonishing word a page is enough for me, even if it's a misprint.

MYSELF: Really? What about Bruno Frank?

DR. H.: Superficial.

MYSELF: German films?

DR. H.: Conscienceless.

MYSELF: Freud?

DR. H.: I daresay he's not as bad as his supporters.

MYSELF: Einstein?

DR. H.: Jewish propaganda.

Silence.

DR. H.: And I've grown rather to dislike Nietzsche. *Which* Guinnesses do you like?

BRIAN HOWARD

WAS OPHELIA MAD?

ON the occasion of Shakespeare's birthday, Professor Ebenezer Crux, the eminent Shakespearian commentator, delivered an enthralling lecture, entitled: "Was Ophelia Mad?"

Opening his address, Professor Crux remarked that, while discussion had raged fiercely in the past over the *bona fides* of Hamlet's insanity, it did not appear to have occurred to anybody to call Ophelia's insanity into question. Yet if the text of the play were carefully examined, might it not be demonstrated that, just as Hamlet was but mad north-north-west and could tell a hawk from a handsaw when the wind was southerly, so Ophelia was but mad south-south-east and could tell a hoopoe from a honey-buzzard when occasion arose?

In support of this contention, Professor Crux began by reminding his audience that Ophelia, after the murder of her father by Hamlet, was no more cognizant of the true facts of the case than was Hamlet after the murder of *his* father by Claudius. The assassination of Polonius by the heir to the throne was a matter which would naturally be kept from the multitude. That a definite attempt was made to keep the truth from Ophelia appeared in her own words: "*They say* he made a good end."

But murder, though it had no tongue, would speak with most miraculous organ. Already it had spoken through the ghost of Hamlet's father, who had been doomed for a certain term to walk the night because he had been cut untimely off with all his imperfections on his head. The cutting off of Polonius was no less untimely. The imperfections on his head were even more numerous.

Was it not, therefore, reasonable to conclude that the Ghost of Polonius would desire vengeance quite as much as the Ghost of the old king? And that, Laertes being away from Elsinore, this Ghost would pour out his woes to Ophelia very much as the Ghost of the old king poured out his to Hamlet?

Having, then, been informed of the truth—in a scene unfortunately lost—what was Ophelia, as a dutiful daughter, to do? Obviously, it was now her business to bring about the death of Hamlet, for the compassing of which purpose she had surely no less reason than Hamlet himself to feign madness—a very handy extenuating circumstance in case of conviction by jury.

Hamlet, however, had been sent out of the country—and the spirit with which Ophelia had conversed might be the devil, for the devil had power to assume a pleasing shape. Ophelia would have grounds more relative than that. Gertrude was stated by the Ghost of Polonius to have been present at the assassination. How, then, to catch the conscience of the Queen?

Continuing, Professor Crux pointed out that Ophelia would reject the idea of staging a second play, entitled *The Rat-Trap* ("A rat! a rat!"), for such a trick was not likely to work twice. But might she not confirm her suspicions by singing snatches of old songs (with new little bits written in), and observing whether Gertrude changed countenance? It was as plain as the sun in heaven that behind the singing of these songs lay some considered purpose. Consider the lines preceding her entrance:

> *Queen.* I will not speak with her.
> *Gent.* She is importunate.

Why should Ophelia be so importunate? And why the Queen so unwilling to grant her audience?

Professor Crux then proceeded to quote a number of pertinent lines from Ophelia's songs, in which she was continually

harping on her father, and drew particular attention to the stanza :

> White his shroud as the mountain snow,
> Larded with sweet flowers,
> Which *bewept to the grave did not go*
> *With true-love showers.*

To what could these last two lines point if not to Gertrude's crocodile tears at the funeral ?

The failure of this so-called " mad scene " on the stage was, said Professor Crux, entirely due to the fact that the actresses who performed the part of Ophelia neglected to suggest the dramatic intention underlying her actions, while the actresses who performed the part of Gertrude were equally negligent in failing to portray her horror on realising that the cat was out of the bag and that her son, whom she dearly loved, might now be publicly proclaimed a murderer.

What happened after that ? The next thing we heard was that Ophelia had committed suicide, the catastrophe being graphically reported by no less an eye-witness than Gertrude herself. But examine Gertrude's story. She told us how Ophelia fell into a weeping brook, how her clothes spread wide and bore her up awhile, and how, floating down stream, she chanted snatches of old tunes—but *what was Gertrude doing all that time ?* Why did she not lift a finger to help Ophelia ? Was not a brook defined in the dictionary as " a small stream," and could not a rescue easily have been effected ?

Gertrude, however, did not want to save Ophelia. She wanted to save Hamlet. That was why she secretly followed Ophelia down to the brook. And that was why—could any intelligent reader doubt it for one moment ?—that was why *Gertrude pushed Ophelia in.*

Concluding, Professor Crux regretted that a subsequent scene in which Ophelia's Ghost returned to tell Laertes the truth about *her* murder had, again, been most unfortunately lost. If only it could be found it would explain that the drinking of the poisoned cup by Gertrude was not the incredible piece of bungling it now appeared, but *a calculated plot conceived and contrived by Laertes.* Possibly the changing of the cups by Laertes should synchronise with the changing of the foils by Hamlet. This would be a fine dramatic stroke, and he would very much like to see the scene staged in that way by some percipient producer.

A vote of thanks to Professor Crux for his interesting remarks having been carried unanimously, coffee was taken to the accompaniment of two recorders and a *viol de gamba.*

HERBERT FARJEON

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Crime on the Hill

Expressionism—a watery blend, but still expressionism—has now invaded our mystery thrillers. Who would have thought, to hear the voice of the loud-speakers at the Shaftesbury, to witness those strange little *tableaux-vivants* driving home the fact that the police are making every effort with flashes to indicate broadcast appeals ? It is all very ingenuous, especially as *Crime on the Hill* is a nice, comfortable concoction with never a pretension in the world. As usual, the unlikeliest member of the cast has committed the murder, and as usual we find we have been cheated of our fair share of the evidence. But for compensation, we have Sir Nigel Playfair in a most deadly caricature of that sinister power in modern crime-detection, the bumptious coroner, some very effective comedy characterisations by Drusilla Wills (who has been too long away from the West End), and Evan John ; and a richly benignant old doctor played by Mr. Fewlass Llewellyn.

The Soldier and the Gentlewoman

The Soldier and the Gentlewoman, at the Vaudeville, makes so good a play that one cannot resist the temptation to be disappointed with it for not being a masterpiece. It is vivid, powerful and impressive ; and worth about twenty other (and jollier) theatrical evenings now available in town. The acting, especially that of Dorothy Dix, Diana Morgan, and Maurice Evans, is brilliant, the production superlatively smooth. There remains the faint dissatisfaction. Analysed, it seems to arise from the character of Gwenllian, the dispossessed daughter of an ancient house who wins back Plâs Einon for herself, first by marriage, then by murder. At times one sees her in the tragic-heroic mask —a monstrous embodiment of the lust of power, to whom the estate is no more than a symbol of the petty despotism which she craves. At other moments she is no more than an unhappy woman seized up and used as an instrument of vengeance by the spirit of the place, resentful of a stranger's intrusion. The two conceptions are not necessarily irreconcilable, but in the play they are not reconciled, and Miss Dix and the producers, while getting the last ounce out of each situation, are apparently unwilling to plump wholeheartedly for either aspect. Miss Dix achieves an unforgettable atmosphere of cold horror in the grim last act in which Gwen murders the sick husband who has threatened her dominion. Mr. Maurice Evans plays Dick direct for sympathy, glossing over the hints of an essential vulgarity as temperamental war-shock weakness. Within the limits of its conception the part is played magnificently,

The Tempest

He who produces *The Tempest* takes his reputation in his hands. The dangers of simplicity are more than counterbalanced by the dangers of sophistication. Mr. Harcourt Williams, at the Old Vic, has chosen the middle path. There is much to be grateful for in his production. He has rightly rejected the wires, transparencies and gauze of West End Shakespeare. His isle is softly and discreetly full of noises. Wonders that delight are suggested and not seen. But the symbolic masques with which he seeks to beguile the audience into magic mood are too cumbersome and earthly for the purpose. On the whole, though, Mr. Williams has well sustained illusion and maintained the balance between philosophy and magic. The grave quietness of his settings is a good background for the sweetness of the words. Miss Peggy Ashcroft, a charming Miranda when she speaks, has, in repose, a mannerism which a little spoils the candour of her performance. But she is well suited to this crystal coolness. Mr. Williams himself plays Prospero with distinction if with a certain monotony of expression. The Caliban of Mr. Malcolm Keen is convincingly fierce in anger but too pert in liquor. Mr. Leslie French is one of the best Ariels we have ever had. Light, beautiful, inhuman, yet with the pathos of subjection in his face, he epitomises the spirit of the play.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, April 28th—
- Youth and Student Rally against Fascism and War. Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, 7.30.
- Miss Susan Isaacs on " Original Sin," Bogey's Bar, 39 Woburn Place, Southampton Row, 8.
- Brahms Centenary, Complete Chamber Works, Wigmore Hall, 8.30. Also April 29th and May 6 at 3, May 1st, 2nd and 4th, at 8.30.

SATURDAY, April 29th—
- Association Football, Cup Final, Wembley.
- Rachmaninoff, Queen's Hall, 3.

SUNDAY, April 30th—
- John A. Hobson on " The Will to Power," Conway Hall, 11.
- Miss Nancy Price, Poetry Reading, Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, 3.30.
- Lt.-Col. J. V. Delahaye on " Can Socialism Save Us ? " Willoughby Hall, 1 Willoughby Road, 7.30.
- T. Braddock on " Socialist Policy at the Next General Election," 7 St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square, 8.
- " Clear All Wires," Piccadilly Theatre.

MONDAY, May 1st—
- " Der Rosenkavalier," Covent Garden, 7.45.
- " High Temperature," Phoenix Theatre.

TUESDAY, May 2nd—
- C. L. R. James on " Self-government for the West Indies," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- Mock Trial on " Being Incorrigibly Clever and Irresistible." Prosecutor : St. John Ervine. Defendants : Miss Laura Cowie, Madame Alice Delysia and Miss Irene Vanbrugh, London School of Economics, 5.30.
- " Das Rheingold," Covent Garden, 8.30.

WEDNESDAY, May 3rd—
- " Die Walküre," Covent Garden, 5.45.

THURSDAY, May 4th—
- " Der Rosenkavalier," Covent Garden, 7.45.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE difficulty facing the sophisticated writer at the outset is that of selection and restriction. He wants to express himself, to say what life has meant to him, but the enormous variety of experience overwhelms him, and any beginning he makes seems to curl and twist away from his subject like the paths in the garden of live flowers. The more he can restrict himself the more he can rule out; and the less he has to say the lighter will his task become. In this the unsophisticated writer has the great advantage that he tends to deal with the surface of life or to express himself in the Romance, in which life as we know it is ruled out. Thus, by an effect of relativity, his path seems to be going quite straight because he jogs on all day uncritically with a merry heart. I have just read two autobiographies of very different literary merit by unsophisticated writers—for though General Sutton, the author of *One-arm Sutton*, Heinemann, 7*s.* 6*d.*, was educated at Eton, he would not claim to be in any way a highbrow. His book, which he says, with pardonable exaggeration, is 95 per cent. true, is entirely about himself. In Gallipoli he got his right hand blown off while he was catching bombs and lobbing them back to the Turkish trenches, and within a few seconds of his loss managed to kill a large Turk in a hand-to-stump tussle. This seems to have increased his pugnacity, and his adventures became steadily wilder and wilder after the war, in Siberia and China. Thus after his shooting the Chinese General Ma, and escaping from his headquarters, we read with no surprise that:

> Safe for the moment I had only one regret: that I hadn't taken the General's head! Now that I stopped to think of it, I had refrained from marring that almost perfect specimen! And I had a Manchurian boar's head over the mantelpiece at home that would have matched the saturnine, ochreous splendour of Ma-Yu-Ching, properly cured and lacquered. Very nearly I turned back to claim my prize.

This is, of course, a touch of the Captain Marryat style of humour, descended from Smollett. Some are rabbits and some are tigers. General Sutton is a genuine man-eater. He might have written a book like Trelawny's *Adventures of a Younger Son*, did he not lack the literary feeling which made Trelawny appreciate Keats and Shelley. General Sutton unfortunately looks at the outside world entirely from the point of view of exhibiting his personal prowess.

* * *

Very different indeed is *Twenty Years A-growing*, by Maurice O'Sullivan (Chatto and Windus, 8*s.* 6*d.*), which, translated from the Gaelic by George Thompson and Moya Llewelyn Davies, will be published on Monday. The author is a native of the Blasket Islands which lie off the Kerry coast, but his first memories are of school at Dingle on the mainland and he did not learn Irish until he went back. He is as unsophisticated as General Sutton, but his book is in an entirely different literary class. It is a book so fresh, so full of feeling for nature and the poetry of life on the island that it is difficult not to be carried away with delight in reading it. The following passage gives a good idea of its merits:

> "By God," said he as he came down, "it will make a great day." The curragh was afloat, each of us with his dog who knew well he was going hunting. As soon as the boat touched the water they leapt in, wagging their tails, their tongues out and barking to each other like any three men would be talking together . . .
>
> We had a beautiful view as we crossed the Great Sound. I could see the little white buildings up in the Tearacht and the shining white road built through the black rocks from the sea all the way to the lighthouse. To the south were the two Skelligs bathed in sunshine, the sea full of all kinds of seabirds, the waves murmuring around us, Inish-vick-ilaun and Inish-na-Bró growing bigger and bigger as we approached them, a group of sheep here and there on the top of Inish-na-Bró and others down in the steep dizzy cliffs. How fearless they are, I thought, missing a good deal of the life of Robinson Crusoe on account of the beauty of the place and the depth of my thoughts. Before long we saw the house on the Inish, its felt roof glittering in the sunlight and fine green fields around it. Further to the West I saw a flock of goats and I thought of Robinson and of the goats he came across on an island just like this. Hundreds and thousands of birds were around, some of them flying through the air, others floating on the water, others settled on the rocks. I did not know what Michael was saying with all the thoughts that were running through my mind. We were alongside the island now and I got the sweet smell of the fern, which grew to the height of a man.

The plan of the book is simple and familiar. Threaded on the story of the boy's life, are chapters describing his memories of every aspect of life on the island—fishing, rounding up sheep, hunting thrushes in the dark on Hallowe'en, matchmaking, a marriage and a wake. All of it has this high-spirited freshness and this sensibility for nature. According to Mr. E. M. Forster, who contributes an introduction, it is much more than this: "It is worth saying 'This book is unique,' lest he (the reader) forget what a very odd document he has got hold of. He is about to read an account of Neolithic civilisation from the inside." If this is really so, Lord Salisbury's remark about the Irish being a race of Hottentots cannot have been so very wide of the truth! The population of Blasket Island has decreased by a quarter since the war, owing to emigration to America. There must be a reason, and it would be strange if it were not economic. "The most important livelihood—that's the fishing—is gone under foot." That probably means that men in curraghs cannot compete with trawlers. Yet why have they not an outboard motor among them? They are in continual contact with America. At moments it almost seems that they are really "neolithic"; apparently they only became aware of lobsters, and learned the use of lobster-pots, forty years ago, from the English.

* * *

One can imagine the sort of book a Frenchman would have written in the same circumstances if these islands had been off the coast of France! There would be nothing but the howling of the Atlantic gales, dashing with furious malignancy upon the wretched rocks where sore-eyed, famished wretches struggled ignobly for their vile subsistence. Why is the Irish boy's version so different? In the answer I think we shall find what is the genuinely primitive quality of the book. For everything is shown here in its most benign aspect. The men are always cheerful and wise, the girls pretty, the old women squatting on their hams in the sun and puffing pipes. Coins jingle in every pocket, and half-crowns and sixpences are showered on little boys. There are dozens of pictures of the sunlight flashing on the waves, of seabirds circling in flocks and fish jumping; there is scarcely one picture of its raining, though the climate of Kerry coast is notoriously damp. This is because O'Sullivan is thinking of his audience—of one literate islander reading aloud his book to the others, and he is determined that it shall be pleasant hearing. They will meet themselves in their best clothes, and happiest mood on the merriest day of the year. In fact he is doing what the primitive inhabitants of primitive little towns in the Middle West do when they go abroad. He is *boosting* the Blaskets. When we turn to ancient Irish literature we find the same thing continually: the sun shines on a land of magnificent heroes and lovely women, here there are youths leaping, there the music of harps of applewood. We are indeed reading the beautiful poetical *boostings* of a primitive community. It is only in the later stages of civilisation that man wants to go deeper than this, and the first step appears to be the appetite for telling unpleasant truths and for hearing unpleasant facts. That is why, though I immensely enjoyed this beautiful picture of island life, I should have felt more hopeful of Irish literature if O'Sullivan had written a ruthless and biting description of the dwindling remnant of a people who appear doomed by their conservatism. But it is nice to be told once more, and to believe, that there are enchanted islands to the West which enjoy perpetual summer "when the nimbly moving wave is covered with foam, when the apple tree is transfigured with blossom, and the white shield is borne on my shoulder to the conflict."

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

The Last of Chéri. By COLETTE. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

The Enemy at the Gate. By A. t'SERSTEVENS. *Barker.* 7s. 6d.

Quintet. By ESTHER MEYNELL. *Chapman and Hall.* 8s. 6d.

The Fall of the King. By JOHANNES V. JENSEN. *Grayson.* 7s. 6d.

The Open Arms. By D. M. LARGE. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

That Summer. By PRISCILLA JOHNSTON. *Duckworth.* 7s. 6d.

Strange Prisoners. By CLOTHILDE WOLLERSEN. *Scholartis.* 7s. 6d.

New Timber Lane. By ERNEST RAYMOND. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.

The Last of Chéri is Colette without the *chic*, a reminder of the dreariness which lies behind the French candour about the things of the flesh, and the sentimentality of the resulting cult of ennui. This is Colette and her world after the fards have worn off and have left them grotesque—an unconscious criticism of her wittier and more amusing books. In Chéri, the gigolo returned from the war, respectably married and miserably impotent, unable to adjust himself to a world of "cads," we have a type scarcely distinguishable from the thousands of bored young men who pace up the Avenue Henri Martin of the *roman psychologique*, and who end themselves, and the book, with a revolver shot discharged by all the author's repressed romanticism. Too old at thirty—it is the theme of a whole strata of Parisian fiction. And in the awful fat and cushion-necked old women who have been his mistresses and are either consoling themselves on the Bourse, or sitting in carefully darkened rooms surrounded by photographs, we have the horrible bankruptcy of the flesh for which *chic* can now do nothing. I do not know when this book was written but the time of the story is 1919, and it has the odour of the period. The translation has some jars for the ear, and, in spite of merits in the drawing of the gigolo and a few excellent phrases, the book is tedious.

Remembering the super-sports purr of Mr. t'Serstevens' first novel, I imagined *The Enemy at the Gate* would be just the book to take away the unpleasant taste of *The Last of Chéri*. *The Enemy at the Gate*, however, reads like one of those second novels which were written years before the first, for it has signs of inexperience on every page and is constantly getting out of tone and out of drawing. Many of the parts are good, but the behaviour of the new model on the road is jerky, erratic, and sometimes absurd. Two half-sisters come to live in an ancient and lonely house on the Flemish dunes. One woman is young, beautiful and romantic, the other in her forties is disappointed and bitter; and suffering further disappointment in a love affair with a smuggler devotes her life to preventing the younger girl from knowing love, or should I say, Love? In the penultimate chapters, which are less shaky, there is murder and an Ophelia-like madness, but the final chapter goes completely flat and ruins the effect. It is partly technical clumsiness, but there is also the adolescent strain of the continental novelette: "I was born for the bold and the headstrong, for men who are no more afraid of love than of blows." Such sublimations are the stock-in-trade of the cosmopolitan novelist. The younger lady is even more remarkable. At first she is fair skinned and has brown hair and bright colouring. A few pages later she has moved on to "the dark and lustrous type of beauty which attracts men of all ages." The best parts of the book are its descriptions of the dunes. These descriptions are extremely good.

The English novelist's taste in women requires a eugenic or ideal beauty. Love becomes a kind of moral hygiene. One does not read in English novels, as in a good paragraph of Colette, of "dishevelled lovers." It is interesting, therefore, to see what Miss Esther Meynell will make of German emotions in a German scene, and here we find the idealised pretty and the idealised grotesque. Her book recalls a German tapestry picture, and might be the work of needle rather than of pen. It is a careful, skilful, flashing little needle. She succeeds in her deliberate intent to make a romantic picture in which under the shadow of the death of the great composer Melchior Burgholt—whom one takes to be Beethoven—a kindly circle continue their bereaved lives piously devoted to the memory and spell of his art. These people are dominated by Egon Konrath, the famous musician, pursuer and pursued of women, who falls in love with an innocent child of the woods, abandons her for a more sophisticated woman in society and returns again to the awakened child. Under her care his broken genius will be rehabilitated. There are many other characters. Music is the religion which binds them together, kindliness their daily bread. The book is, in fact, a kind of fairy tale of simple gnomes, quaint corners, and rustic prettiness (which is not pretty-pretty), and the romantic atmosphere is meticulously preserved. For her success in creating this romantic world Miss Esther Meynell has to pay first by tedium: all the stitches are the same length. Secondly, by too much sweetness and cleanliness: without asking for realism one has a right to insist on wickedness and horror in romance, there is no sleeping beauty without her witch. Furthermore, the novelist's people suffer from having, all of them, taken refuge in a shadow. Their heads are all creeping back into their shells. But one can respect in *Quintet* the art of its detail, its flashes of pathos and glee, its reverent murmurs of music, and put the question of significance aside.

In *The Fall of the King* we go farther north to the Danes and the raw brutal filthiness of the Middle Ages. Johannes Jensen is apparently a Danish author of great reputation. At first I found him one of the vehement, declamatory unreadable. He seemed to delight in rubbing your nose—and there were some bad smells in mediaeval Denmark—into a series of loosely connected episodes, then holding you up by the scruff of the neck and saying, "Look, you fool, there's a war on." And when you said, "But what war?" he shook you again and gave a Norse roar and said, "Oh that's all over now. It's a rebellion now. Didn't you notice twenty or thirty years go by in the last two chapters and that all this interest in the opening characters is out of date? Now the sins of the fathers—that rape of the Jewess, that abduction of the fisherman's daughter—are being visited . . ." "On the children," you anticipated. "Not at all," he said, "we've moved on since then. On the grandchildren." And then he rubbed your nose in something else. I gave it up and took to dipping into odd chapters here and there. I found Mikkel, the lank, filthy, frustrated beggar student of the opening chapter riding now "in the King's name through Jutland" in full saga style, discovering Axel, the bastard son of Susanna, who was the woman Mikkel had loved in his youth but had not possessed. The beauty of Axel is not strong enough to conquer Mikkel's desire to avenge himself upon the world for his frustration, and he murders Axel. The sufferings of Axel and his death are described with horrible and exultant detail, but also with an immense imaginative vigour. The novelist excels in evoking the raw animality, now shifty and now heroic, of Danish life, and one experiences this world with the skin. Mikkel, befriended by the fallen king he has served in old age, emerges from this hoarse-voiced saga, to one's astonishment, as something like a whole character. The novelist had been working underground all the time! There is a kind of clangorous poetry to this book, and there is happily no attempt to turn the early Middle Ages into nice, clean, skim milk for the Chestertonian babes. Nor, on the other hand, is the book a saga romanticised for the glamour hunters.

Ireland has been palatable to the English reader only in glamorous or comic disguise, and Irishmen have been able to supply both at discretion. Mrs. Large is on the side of comic Ireland. Her earlier books have been much overpraised—Misses Somerville and Ross, and George Birmingham are on a much more spirited plane of comedy. Still, in *The Open Arms*, which recounts the humours surrounding the starting of an hotel in a West of Ireland fishing village, she is amusing, charming and observant. The chief irritant is a synthetic dialect which smells of the notebook. But *The Open Arms* is an improvement in this respect on *Cloonagh*.

It is also a far better entertainment than *That Summer*, which is depressingly typical of acres of English novel writing. It skims no more than the top layer off a few deadly and hilarious characters who divide their time between dull parties in London and week-ends in Sussex. The story deals with a young woman's love for a man who is old enough to be her father. He is alleged to be wise and experienced, but there is only the author's word for it. *Strange Prisoners* has an allied theme, but is a much more serious and dignified performance. It treats of the love of a mother and daughter for the same man. The people have a certain reality, although they are visible chiefly as heads swimming with puzzling difficulty in the grey prose of the psychological inspection tank. The action is imprisoned beneath the surface. The book becomes a study in the repressed and unspoken, and has a curious intensity and concentration. I am undecided, however, whether the

author is sensitive or whether she is just *worrying* about her characters.

New Timber Lane on the other hand, has a post-prandial expansiveness. It assumes an air and acquires a manner. "My father was Sir Osmund Earlwin, baronet of Cowbourne Park, Sussex, and I his younger son, brother Jack being two years my senior." So it begins, proceeds to an account of the estate, canters agreeably through a marriage and a separation, an elopement in Boulogne and, after other adventures, passes into an affair with a lady years younger than himself. Children, legitimate and illegitimate, add a gentlemanly discursiveness to Sir Edmund's life story, and he has an amiable taste in scenery.

V. S. PRITCHETT

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS

Life of Joseph Chamberlain. By J. L. GARVIN. Vol. 2. *Macmillan.* 21s.

With unflagging zeal and unfailing high spirits Mr. Garvin devotes six hundred and forty more pages to the somewhat painful epic of his hero's pilgrimage. This volume is necessarily lacerating, dealing as it does with a decade of disappointment, almost of despair. After reading Vol. 2 the most savage enemy will be compelled—even if unwillingly—to admit that between 1885 and 1895 Chamberlain suffered adequately for his sins. Mr. Garvin leaves his hero about to enter into his heritage as Colonial Secretary in a Conservative administration. No doubt Chamberlain is now going to enjoy himself thoroughly; yet there must have always been a fly in the ointment of his life. He had stated as loudly and as confidently as ever in 1887:

> Of course, I shall be premier: there is nothing more certain. I will rebuild the fortress . . . We will not have Home Rule. . . . Great reforms throughout Great Britain and Ireland. But it shall never come to granting Home Rule.

It is, of course, great fun to be an imperialist. But even so the Boer War and Chinese Labour were feeble substitutes for the golden visions of 1887.

The six hundred and forty pages are mostly devoted to the Home Rule split, and Mr. Garvin's biography gains from the fact that, in the last resort, he differs from his subject. For Mr. Garvin is an Irishman and knows by birthright what Chamberlain was never to learn. Here, indeed, is his great quandary. Mr. Garvin can defend his subject's honour only at the expense of his sagacity: and his honour wins the day.

Mr. Gladstone's mismanagement of Chamberlain is reckoned one of the gravest misfortunes of his career. Yet the more Mr. Garvin can prove that Chamberlain was inevitably a Unionist approaching Ireland as a municipal reformer, the more clearly he shows that it was "impossible to get Chamberlain in," the less can Gladstone be blamed for not wasting too much time in the attempt.

Gladstone has always been severely criticised for not making Chamberlain Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1886 (and Chamberlain was galled by this). But, as Mr. Garvin acutely shows, it was a very difficult matter of tactics. If he could not hope to keep Chamberlain he was quite right not to give him an office which would permit him to upset the administration. Or to put it crudely: could Chamberlain have been bribed with the Exchequer and the unauthorised programme to abandon his municipal view of the Irish question, or in his own phrase "to split up the Empire"?

Mr. Garvin says not. Mr. Gladstone presumably thought not. And if Chamberlain is to be acquitted, Gladstone must be acquitted too. It is possible to differ from both Gladstone and Mr. Garvin on a matter which cannot in any case be proved. But the anti-Gladstonians cannot have it both ways. You cannot blame Gladstone for lack of diplomacy in failing to keep Chamberlain's loyalty and at the same time praise Chamberlain for his firm refusal to be a party, as he thought it, to the disruption of the Empire. Yet we may sympathise with Chamberlain's annoyance. For the way in which Gladstone worked round Chamberlain's position, isolated him at every point and cut off his supplies is an exquisite study in tactics. Gladstone's strategy broke down, but his tactics were impeccable. Parnell's strategy was terrific, but his tactics lamentable. As a result, Gladstone, Chamberlain and Parnell all eat each other, and for those who dislike assisting at a barmecide's feast, the spectacle is atrocious.

Mr. Garvin admits that Mr. Gladstone, however faulty in method, however much nonsense he and his followers talked about the "Union of Hearts," had the root of the matter in him. By an effort of the imagination he had grasped a truth hidden from his "metallic" steely colleague. How far from the realities were Chamberlain's alternatives, five years coercion (in what he had called the Irish Poland), Land Purchase (which he had opposed when Gladstone proposed it), Local Government, Home Rule all round, getting rid of Gladstone, getting rid of Parnell, any programme save the one which might conceivably have been successful! When all this was accomplished (as it eventually was) the Irish would be delighted to become Englishmen. The peasants of Connemara—well-scrubbed and in their Sunday-best—would ask nothing better than to be shown round the Highbury Green houses by the pretty Miss Chamberlains. What a delusion!

With the Liberals finally out of office Chamberlain acts as a matador to the Tory party. Waving the red cloak of Home Rule before the Bull he leads it rumbling round the ring. In 1885 he had said that the aristocracy must pay ransom for their privileges; and from 1886–1892 he made them pay pretty heavily for the Union—County Councils, Congested District Boards, Free Education. Chamberlain, with hardly a friend in the world, and with few but his Birmingham tenants behind him, extracted, by the most painful dentistry, all these reforms from the jaw of the Salisbury administration. It is a fascinating study in English political technique, and would be perfect if at the end the Irish problem had not been as exacerbated as ever. Yet if Chamberlain was a great man, he showed it during two periods—when Mayor of Birmingham, and between 1886 and 1892 when, far from collapsing, as an ordinary man would have collapsed, he even increased his power.

This roughly is the story Mr. Garvin has to tell. How far is he successful in the telling? The pitch is perhaps a trifle too high. "Magnificent speech," "the speech of his life," "the House rocked." Such phrases trip too lightly from the biographer's pen. For they are not borne out by the extracts which Mr. Garvin proceeds to quote. Chamberlain could draw up a first-rate memorandum and write a very good letter. But most oratory reads shoddy, and Chamberlain's, it must be confessed, reads shoddier than most. No doubt when excitement ran high and halls were crowded, when the audience thrilled to the speaker's hissing voice and gimlet nose, he was devastatingly effective. But fifty years later, when controversy is dead and Chamberlainism a failure, in the armchair and the light of history, this blistering bleakness comes as anything but a consolation to the spirit. Mr. Garvin tells us at great length the uncomfortable story of his relations with Morley, but the spectacle of these two thin-skinned but affectionate men alternately scratching each other like cats and weeping over each other like school-girls, is more nauseating than pathetic. Chamberlain had evidently a great need of love, but was somehow unable to inspire it outside his home. The most attractive letter in the volume is one written to his children from Turkey. Otherwise, much against his will, he was a friendless man. Dilke went one way, Morley another. Lord Randolph sank into imbecility and Chamberlain remained almost alone, save for Jesse Collings, whose affectionate stupidity tried him almost beyond endurance. There is a terrible lack of love in his life, and Mr. Garvin cannot be blamed for the March wind that whistles through his pages.

And then what company he kept! He was always talking about the "conduct to be expected from English gentlemen"; yet he was led into disaster by O'Shea. Was he so ignorant of Ireland that he mistook O'Shea for an Irish gentleman? And why put so much faith in Labby, who, as Harcourt said, "talks to everybody, writes to everybody, and betrays everybody"? Labby, who, though a good bit of a blackguard, was not a cad, despised Chamberlain for his friendship with himself, and when he turned on him without a qualm, could exasperate him more than anyone.

> "I have not come down here to defend Judas," he observed in 1891. "Still, there was something to be said for Judas. After betraying his Master he did not attend public meetings: he did not revile his associates: he did not sponge upon the priests, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. He did not go swaggering about Judea, saying that he had now joined the society of Jerusalem. No, Judas was contrite, Judas was ashamed. He went out and hanged himself. In some ways Judas compares advantageously with Mr. Chamberlain."

But the pity of it, Iago! For Chamberlain, more than all his Liberal colleagues, more than Harcourt or Morley or Asquith, understood the social problem. He was just the leader the Liberal party needed when the old man finally went, and the party lost something which only he could supply. Yet a reading of Mr. Garvin's biography will show that it was not only the Irish

problem which prevented England profiting fully from his talents. Well-informed as he was in his radicalism, he always had in him, though he may not have known it, the virus of imperialism. And the man born with this disease may infect others, but can never cure himself. The charge that can be brought against Chamberlain is, that he, the very incarnation of political non-conformity, corrupted the non-conformist conscience and sent it neighing after the flesh-pots of Johannesburg. This will be the story of the succeeding twenty years and we shall read something about it in Mr. Garvin's third instalment. FRANCIS BIRRELL

BOOK OF THE WORDS

Plays of a Half-Decade. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Green Bay Tree. By MORDAUNT SHAIRP. *Allen and Unwin.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Dinner at Eight. By GEORGE S. KAUFMAN and EDNA S. FERBER. *Heinemann.* 5*s.*

Design for Living. By NOEL COWARD. *Heinemann.* 5*s.*

Yours Unfaithfully. By MILES MALLESON. *Gollancz.* 5*s.*

Of Thee I Sing. By GEORGE S. KAUFMAN and MORRIS RYSKIND. *Gollancz.* 5*s.*

It has often been said that a play is not a play until it is acted. In other words, it must be seen to be believed. That, unquestionably, is why plays are not so widely read as novels. The imagination is called upon to do double duty. Even the words set down for the characters to speak are, after all, merely so many stage directions in roman type. On the printed page, the plays are only half there.

But if the plays are only half there when printed, they are sometimes, as many playwrights will testify, even less than half there when acted. Belief may now be easy, but we do want to believe the truth. And how much of the truth of *The Tempest* do you get on the stage? How high would Shakespeare stand to-day if we knew him only through performers and producers? Until we read a play, we cannot be sure of the facts. The same might be said of talkies. A talkie is not a talkie until it is filmed—but when it is filmed, is it the true talkie? Perhaps one day, when their technique is more generally understood by the public, talkies, even as stage plays, will come to dust-sheets. Indeed, it is possible that there is already, if the truth were realised, a bigger public for printed talkies than for printed plays, and that a fortune now awaits any publisher live enough to bring out the text (with copious illustrations) of *Congress Dances* or of *Sunshine Susie*—or why not an omnibus volume containing the best *Talkies of a Half-Decade*, similar to the *Plays of a Half-Decade* in which Messrs. Gollancz have just assembled eleven firm favourites, from *Journey's End* and *Young Woodley* to *Musical Chairs* and *The Rose Without a Thorn*?

To read these plays after you have seen them, will be to realise many original intentions which were obscured in the performance. Yet it is impossible, once having seen a stage performance, to get entirely clear of it. In the battle between first impressions and second thoughts, it is the first impression that commands the big battalions. And since very few people ever read a play which they have seen on the stage unless they enjoyed the performance, it may be assumed that it is usually for the definite purpose of recapturing the first impression, that they turn to the book. But there is a more intelligent game to play with famous plays than this. Provide yourself with a copy of *The Green Bay Tree* and endeavour, if you can, to see the entertaining Mr. Dulcimer in any terms other than those of Mr. Frank Vosper's insistently vivid performance at the St. Martin's Theatre. Provide yourself with a copy of *Dinner at Eight* after visiting the production at the Palace, where you will observe that Miss Irene Vanbrugh plays the part of the hostess without making any attempt at an American accent, and then see, when you read the play, whether the impression made on you by Miss Vanbrugh is not so strong that it is beyond your power to restore the American accent which obviously should be there. You will probably come to the conclusion that to read a play after you have seen it, leaves you pretty well where you were. To arrive at the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, you must read it first—which is a minor crime since, if dramatic surprise counts for anything, this will mar your pleasure when you see the play afterwards.

It is clear, then, that we must (as usual) give up the hunt for perfection; and when we are informed on the wrapper of Mr. Noel Coward's latest play that "*Design for Living*, now scoring a great success in America, must be read to be fully appreciated," we should take the information with a pinch of salt. We may then enjoy Mr. Coward's jolly composition on the triangle, out of which he succeeds in striking several fresh notes. This comedy makes, as all comedies should, a pretty pattern. Attracted, as usual, by the truth, but too much a man of the world to fall dangerously in love with it, Mr. Coward proceeds to cut fashionable and comic capers before its shrine. What, he asks, is to be done if the flesh is weak and if three people, two men and a girl, are passionately attached to one another? Is the girl to live with the playwright and play false with the painter? Is she to live with the painter and play false with the playwright? Is she to live without either while they live with each other? All these experiments are tried, and all go up in the fireworks with which Mr. Coward knows so well how to illuminate, if not the skies, the flies. Finally, to the great scandal of all beholders, it is agreed that the girl and the painter and the playwright shall set up a *ménage à trois* on a sort of Monday-Wednesday-Friday-painter, Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday-playwright basis. This, Mr. Coward knows, will seem so preposterous to the stalls that they will accept it as contentedly as wedding-bells. It is not really a solution at all. The only solution, says Mr. Coward, is that there is no solution, so we may as well have pantaloon on and be done with it. In wit and workmanship Mr. Coward has done nothing better than *Design for Living*, the sharpest criticism of which comes from the mouths of one of the characters who says: "He flips along with easy swift dialogue, but he doesn't go deep enough." This is Mr. Coward's clear-headed estimate of his own work. He is under no illusions. The only danger is that he may tire of paddling in the shallows.

Mr. Miles Malleson's *Yours Unfaithfully* may also be read before production. It deals with problems of infidelity and jealousy similar to those dealt with by Mr. Coward, but it approaches them from a different angle. For where Mr. Coward is a performer, Mr. Malleson is a reformer who has fallen deeply in love with the truth and is, I suspect, just a trifle disappointed in her. The struggle in *Yours Unfaithfully* is a struggle to make the best of marriage by encouraging a little infidelity in your mate

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when the need becomes manifest and to maintain complacency during these prescribed absences. If the complacency of Mr. Malleson's characters is upset—and it is upset, because Mr. Malleson is too honest to let it be anything else—the characters remain radically well-meaning, radically large-hearted through all their bitter trials. They have no secrets from each other. Everything is open and above-board. They are always ready to "talk it over." Their one common enemy is human nature. But when human nature triumphs, Mr. Malleson will not fly to the Harlequinade for consolation. He comforts himself with the wise assurance that this is not the end, it is only the middle. Some day, some how, we shall all succeed in satisfying our promiscuous sexual desires without resorting to subterfuge and without upsetting the domestic apple-cart. The fact that we have not found out how to do it yet may be a little dispiriting, but there is no knowing what mountains may not be removed by sincerity, admission of the facts, and an earnest attempt to sort them out.

All this means too much to Mr. Malleson for him to have written a very good play about it. Virtue and tolerance are not dramatic qualities, and although to an idealist like Mr. Malleson they may appear in exciting colours, they depress the liveliness of this particular comedy, which might have been happier as a novel. The same criticism cannot be made of George S. Kaufman and Morris Ryskind's crazy, hilarious squib on American politics—*Of Thee I Sing*—a play you may read in the comfortable assurance that you are spoiling no pleasures to come, since it is far too local in application to stand a chance of production in a West End theatre. The more's the pity. This reckless romp, setting forth the story of John P. Wintergreen who runs a presidential campaign on Love, is carried through with Aristophanic gusto:

> My friends, the issue of this campaign is a simple one. We do not talk to you about war debts or wheat or immigration—we appeal to your hearts, not your intelligence. It is the old, old story, yet ever new—the sweetest story ever told. John P. Wintergreen, candidate for President of the United States of America, loves Mary Turner. Mary Turner, the most beautiful, the loveliest example of typical American womanhood—and I defy our opponents to say otherwise—loves John P. Wintergreen. He has proposed to her in 47 States of the Union, and in 47 States she has accepted him. To-night she will give him her answer in the great Empire State of New York! John and Mary, stand up!

That is a very fair sample of the fun. One cannot help wishing, when reading this play, that the authors had been born in England. Since they were not, it is open to any playwright who chooses to give us *Rule, Britannia!*

MORE DEATHS

Death Behind the Door. By VICTOR MACCLURE. *Harrap.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Death by Request. By ROMILLY and KATHERINE JOHN. *Faber and Faber.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Fair Murder. By NICHOLAS BRADY. *Geoffrey Bles.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Sapphire. By A. E. W. MASON. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Paradine Case. By ROBERT HICHENS. *Benn.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Alias. By FRED ANDREAS. *Geoffrey Bles.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The first three of these are genuine detective stories by conscientious authors. The solutions all work.

Death Behind The Door is solved by Inspector Burford very quickly, and most of the book is devoted to his efforts to bring home the crime to the right quarter. This *genre* of detection, where the author deliberately sacrifices the tenterhooks of suspense, is apt to make the reader lose interest half-way through and turn to the last page at once. But Mr. MacClure has a light touch in dialogue which saves him from such a fate. The local colour of salmon fishing is thinly applied; but considerable pains are taken with the criminal's psychology to make it plausible, and the result is convincing, if inevitable—another of these modern psychotic types.

Death By Request is a curious title. The scene of the crime is my favourite one, a country house party with strictly limited choice of criminals. The story is narrated in the first person by a clergyman, who manages to give more liveliness to all the characters than one has come to expect in a detective story. Mr. and Mrs. John are to be highly praised for their dialogue. If all suspects' conversations were as spirited as these, we should not look out of the window so often on a long railway journey. The book has a double ending, a solution followed by a super-solution; and both fit very neatly.

In *Fair Murder* the fat woman at a fair is exhibited, when the curtain is drawn for the audience, with her throat cut, or rather pierced—a splendid beginning for Mr. Brady's clergyman detective to work on. Here is a very different clergyman to Mr. and Mrs. John's; his botanical knowledge, devastating in its extent, is intolerably to the fore. Only his actions can redeem his horrid conversation. But in action he is a changed man. I wish Mr. Brady would always keep him too busy to talk, for his deductive capacity is colossal. The motive for the fat lady's demise turns out—I shall give nothing away—most appropriately to be connected with her fat. If readers will skip the gardening hints they will be well rewarded by the working out of a very ingenious and plausible plot.

I expected Mr. Mason's new novel to be called "No Other Panther," for we begin in the Burmese jungle, in a state of mysterious suspense, watching two glowing green eyes in the dead of night. And away we go, to Mandalay, to London, out again to Upper Burma, across to Ceylon, and back once more to London. Mr. Mason always seems to travel on P. and O. liners. *The Sapphire* will delight any one who liked *No Other Tiger*, because the ingredients are exactly the same mixed to the same recipe. *The Paradine Case* is built on scenario lines. The style is luscious; the husky voice of Greta alone might make it acceptable. Without that divine spark it is too rich a mixture for my poor cylinders to fire on. The story is of a sensational murder trial, but there is no detective element whatever.

Alias is translated from Germany. The publishers have classified it as a mystery novel, but there is nothing mysterious about it. A German chemist pretends to commit suicide in order to escape from his family and live with his mistress. The essence of the story lies in describing the psychological changes produced in the chemist, the mistress, and the family by such a drastic action; and the moral of it all is that if you are sufficiently depressed to wish to escape from the uncomfortable half of life you might just as well escape from the other half while you are about it.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

GEORGE CRABBE

The Life of George Crabbe by His Son. With an Introduction by E. M. FORSTER. The World's Classics Series. *Oxford University Press.* 2*s.*

George Crabbe. An Anthology chosen by F. L. LUCAS. Poets in Brief Series. *Cambridge University Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

There are few biographies that give us the impression of being better suited to the personage they describe than the life of Crabbe written by his son. The elder and the younger Crabbe were much alike. Superficially they were neither of them brilliant men; but the younger George possessed underlying qualities that were afterwards to endear him to Edward Fitzgerald, at a time when they were close neighbours near Woodbridge, while the poet, though somewhat taciturn and melancholy, always deficient in a flow of easy small-talk, engaged the interest of Burke, Fox and Dr. Johnson, and visited Scott in Edinburgh on equal terms. A brilliant and lively narrative would have been out of place. The son had never written a book before, and undertook his father's life with hesitation—qualms that proved utterly unjustified; a certain simplicity, even awkwardness, of style and diction, fits the biography of a homespun versifier very well.

A portrait emerges which is affectionate and yet distinct. It is true, as Mr. Forster points out, in his preface to the *Life* in *The World's Classics*, that Crabbe was often concerned to paint his father "more amiable or respectable than the facts warrant." He softens the features, but they are still those of a human being. We see the poet, first of all as a young man, desperately struggling to make his way in London, whither he had gone in search of fame and fortune, leaving behind him the girl he longed to marry—"Oh! Sally, how I want you!" he wrote in his journal—then as a modest country clergyman, who scribbled and botanised from year to year. Outwardly placid, his life was veined and shadowed with darkness. The melancholia which settled down on Sarah Crabbe and assumed the dimensions of lunacy before her death, seems to have transferred itself in some measure to her husband. "Nothing," he noted pathetically on the outside of one of her old letters, "can be more sincere than this, nothing more

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JONATHAN CAPE THIRTY BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON

reasonable and affectionate; and yet happiness was denied." Crabbe, like many of his contemporaries, found in opium a means of soothing the ache of experience.

But he was no romantic opium-debauchee. Romanticism, and all it stands for in life and literature, was alien to the temperament with which he was born, and cannot be numbered among the influences that shaped his verse. Crabbe's was a hard-wearing humdrum spirit; he neither envisaged the world as a place of torment, lit up by occasional electric flashes, such as descend like Alpine thunderstorms in the poems of Shelley; nor could he follow Wordsworth across the countryside, to lose himself in a pantheistic mountain-fog. For him the everyday world and its sober colouring. "In botany," writes his son, "grasses, the most useful, but the least ornamental, were his favourites; in minerals, the earth and sands; in entomology, the minuter insects. His devotion to these pursuits appeared to proceed purely from the love of science and the increase of knowledge—at all events, he never seemed to be captivated with the mere beauty of natural objects. . . . Within the house was a kind of scientific confusion; in the garden, the usual showy foreigners gave place to the most scarce flowers, and especially to the rarer weeds, of Britain; and these were scattered here and there only for preservation. In fact, he neither loved order for its own sake, nor had any very high opinion of that passion in others. . . ."

Something of that same tendency can be seen in his poems. His masters—as far as he had a master—were the Augustan poets who had dominated his youth and the decorous stiffness of whose methods he had attempted to copy. The great Doctor had condescended to snub him in public. Later, Johnson benevolently set to work and helped him to revise *The Village* for publication, re-writing (and much improving) several lines, since he admired its fidelity to "Truth and Nature." Otherwise, Crabbe travelled a separate road. His verse, though eighteenth century in form, owes little to the elegant pastoralism of that period and still less to the uneasy stirrings of the Romantic Movement. It is unvarnished, almost baldly matter-of-fact. The English countryside was never, for George Crabbe, a flowery region through which one drove in well-sprung carriages, exchanging nods with picturesque and subservient yokels. It was of the stuff of reality and harsh commonplace, a coarse background against which he had spent his days.

If it had a charm, it was the charm of familiar things. He always remembered his boyhood on the East Coast; and the sedgy, salty country around Aldborough—a township he had hated and yet loved, where as a boy he had rolled barrels across the quay—reappears again and again in his finest poems:

> Here on its wiry stem, in rigid bloom,
> Grows the salt lavender that lacks perfume;
> Here the dwarf sallows creep, the septfoil harsh,
> And the soft slimy mallow of the marsh;
> Low on the ear the distant billows sound,
> And just in view appears their stony bound;
> No hedge nor tree conceals the glowing sun,
> Birds, save a wat'ry tribe, the district shun,
> Nor chirp among the reeds where bitter waters run.

Such mitigated beauties appealed to Crabbe. One can be sure that he would either have detested the Alps or celebrated them in lines of appalling dullness, meant to hide a complete absence of real emotion. Nor is it probable that he would have done well by the Italian landscape. A memory, for Crabbe to enjoy it, must be sub-acid; and a scene, if it was to rouse him to his best, must be tempered by a sort of lingering nostalgic gloom, like the sweet-rotten fragrance of the end of autumn:

> Far to the left he saw the huts of men
> Half hid in mist that hung upon the fen.
> Before him swallows, gathering for the sea,
> Took their short flights and twitter'd on the lea;
> And, near, the bean-sheaf stood, the harvest done,
> And slowly blacken'd in the sickly sun.

He liked a prospect that accorded with his own nature. Of him, as of *Peter Grimes*, it might be said:

> He nursed the feelings these dull scenes produce,
> And loved to stop beside the opening sluice,
> Where the small stream, confined in narrow bound,
> Ran with a dull, unvaried, sadd'ning sound.

That last line is perhaps his most evocative. Not only does it recall Goldsmith's *Traveller*:

> Alone, unfriended, melancholy, slow . . .

but it seems to stand as an appropriate epigraph on his actual achievement; not the work of a very great writer, not the mirror of an exceptionally gifted spirit; often monotonous, usually laggard, and always limited, and yet instinct with a tiny trickle of living sound.

PETER QUENNELL

VACUITY IS THE DEVIL

Coloured Glass. By INNES HART. *Rich and Cowan.* 7s. 6d.

The heroine, Innes Hart says plainly enough at the beginning of her novel, is nothing; a self-deceiving little poseur with no inside, no morals, no existence independent of her poses. It is useless to look for flattery in the mirror of Clare Beresford: there is none of the usual pleasure to be got from identifying oneself with a virtuous, a misunderstood, or a brilliant heroine. Nor will Clare's dangerously deceptive charm affect us; our part is merely to examine its results in the lives of the other characters. *Coloured Glass* begins uncompromisingly, leaving out the usual inducements, but it has rewards for brave readers. The story of James, a middle-aged clergyman who marries Clare and who suffers most deeply from her unreality, is genuinely touching, and the spectacle of Aunt Agatha's gradual withdrawal from her world, which she had bullied successfully for many years, is subtly imagined and economically shown. James is the only attractive character, but the worst of them, even Clare's fishlike and sublimely selfish lover, is made to seem possible. Miss Hart is bold in her exposures and carries them off with an air of integrity sometimes whimsically softened, sometimes sharpened by irony. There is a touch of unnecessary vindictiveness in her introduction of Clare, but the book improves as it goes on. The story, as one might expect from reading *Facets* or *Adjustments*, is held in leash by the theme. Miss Hart enforces upon us the limitations of her characters, showing the truth only through the coloured glass of their several ignorances. The pleasure we take in a story, she appears to say, is primitive, like the pleasures of drinking or hunting; a little of it is good, a lot is debilitating. Unregenerate readers will certainly question whether imaginative structure and the intellectual vistas which even Miss Hart's aesthetic Puritanism permits afford enough compensation for the loss of a straight run, or a faithful record for a chance to share the characters' emotions. It may be frivolous always to demand a release of emotion, but some form of release is necessary if the total impression is to be unambiguous. Pattern, of course (but the pattern of *Coloured Glass* is not highly developed) would make all the difference.

OPIUM DREAMS

Opium: The Diary of an Addict. By JEAN COCTEAU. Translated by ERNEST BOYD. *Allen and Unwin.* 5s.

M. Cocteau retains an air of youth. His association with the Symbolists has been forgotten, and, despite a long list of books written since, his latest volume is always something new and in the forefront of fashion. *Opium*, it is true, is three years old now, and long before the translation of it was finished M. Cocteau had already abandoned literature (temporarily, perhaps?) for the films. Yet even in its belated English *Opium* is fresh, piquant and disturbing. Though it adds one more volume to the annals of self-deception, you cannot read it without being persuaded that dope is the latest thing.

> I believe that nature inflicts upon us the laws of Sparta and of the ant heap. Should we evade them? Where do our prerogatives stop? Where does the forbidden zone begin?

One gets the impression of a new journey beginning (but M. Cocteau must have been an addict for years), the case for opium is asserted again, this time purely from the point of view of aesthetic experience, normality is described as madness, the dream as the reality, and so on. The book was written during four months in a clinic at St. Cloud and records a period of disintoxication: it fascinates by a mixture of daintiness and horror. The agonised nerves of recovery are exposed with a remarkable beauty and tension.

> With opium what deadens the organism is of a euphoric order. The tortures are caused by a return to life against the grain. An entire spring fires one's veins, driving before it ice and burning lava.
>
> I advise the patient who has been cut off for a week to bury his head in his arms, to press his ear against his arm, and wait. Collapses, mutinies, exploding factories, armies in flight, deluge—the ear listens to the great apocalypse of the starry night of the human body.

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As he lies in hospital, writing and drawing, he recaptures the sensations of opium :

> The smoker becomes one body with the objects surrounding him. His cigarette, a finger, falls from his hand.
>
> * * *
>
> The smoker rises slowly, like a toy balloon, slowly turns, and slowly declines on to a dead moon, whose weak attraction prevents him from departing.
>
> * * *
>
> The smoker is surrounded by hills. It is impossible to keep the mind at that level. It is eleven in the morning. One has been smoking for five minutes ; on consulting one's watch, it is five in the morning.
>
> A thousand times the smoker must bring himself back to his point of departure, like the floating egg in a shooting-gallery. The slightest sharp sound causes the egg to be projected by the stream of water.

The experience, the " well-being " of the addict is a clairvoyance of all the senses. Opium, M. Cocteau says, has its own weather and good and ill health. For the real statement of illness one must turn to the drawings, forty-three in the original, reduced here to twenty-seven. They represent an extraordinary graph of nervous torture, these foetus-like bodies gashed at one side, truncated arms, serpents issuing from eye-sockets, and the agonised stance of bodies like living clusters of rawplugs. The drawings, we are told, were done partly under the influence of opium, so that they represent not the horrors of disintoxication but a skeletal experience of the actual drug. The contrast between drawings and text is often extreme. In both one feels, suspended with a curious lightness, the sensibility and intelligence of the author : one meets again the odd jokes about dogs, memories of Proust, memories of childhood and the theatre, and Chaplin bracketed with Greek tragedy. M. Cocteau certainly has the secret of keeping his circus going. G. W. STONIER

ANTI-THEATRE

On Reading Shakespeare. By LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH. *Constable.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

After reading this delightfully urbane essay three times, once on its appearance in *Life and Letters*, and twice in its extended form in this book, it is difficult to made up one's mind whether nine-tenths of what our author says is both new and true, or whether he has spent the last few years elaborately missing the bus.

The onus of Mr. Pearsall Smith's book lies in the title. He takes the bustling, busy Elizabethan theatrical manager of the Mermaid and the Globe out of the street into his library, soaks himself in his writings, notes all his beauties, thrills to all his characters and serves him up again to us as a man who might profitably have passed his time writing pure poetry in the style of Rimbaud, varied with novels in the manner of Tolstoy. In moments of comprehensible exasperation our author appears to deck out the national poet in the garments of an unconscientious Paul Valéry.

Certainly artists often do not know where their strength lies, and are often adversely affected by the circumstances of their age. The theatre may well be Shakespeare's misfortune. Perhaps it is a pity that the Elizabethan age was what it was. But when the critic goes on to say : " Well then, let's pretend it wasn't. Come up to my library and we'll study the *Midsummer Night's Dream* as pure poetry, or pretend that Lady Macbeth came out of a novel like *Anna Karenin*," something seems to go wrong. For, whether you like it or not, Shakespeare did write for the stage every bit as much as Racine. Every line he wrote of his plays (till his very last years) was written with the intention of its being recited in the theatre ; otherwise it would have been written quite differently. Further, the plays are not even mainly made up of character studies, but of the conflict of wills. People fight and yell, and hector, and laugh, and slay across the stage ; they eat or are eaten by opposing passions in a vast cosmic massacre. The difference between a Shakespeare play and, say, Luria or Beckett is not only, perhaps not primarily, that the characters are not so vivid nor the verse so rich, but they are truly " closet-drama " in that there is no adequate conflict of wills. They do not thunder in the index. Mr. Pearsall Smith with scholarship, intelligence, taste, wit and culture segregates everything we find least sympathetic in Shakespeare to-day and hands us back the gold separated from the dross. Yet strangely enough, to change the metaphor, his woollens have come back slightly shrunk from the wash. Mr. Pearsall Smith says frankly that he cannot bear seeing Shakespeare on the stage. He shudders and flies. We agree with him. So do we. But this is our own misfortune, not Shakespeare's fault. For it is not really very difficult to act Shakespeare. He needs far less technique than Mr. Somerset Maugham because the words do half of it for you. Unfortunately, actors and actresses who have studied the technique of the modern realistic stage and have no feeling for poetry are the worst possible persons to help us. Schoolboys and undergraduates (particularly country boys who have never been taken " to see a Shakespeare play ") do not cause distress. Any preparatory school can put up a better performance of Shakespeare than a London company, granted there is a good " English " master, since moral rather than technical gifts are required. More than once Mr. Pearsall-Smith compares a Shakespeare play with a musical score, a truth a good producer will never forget. But he would not argue against Mozart's art forms because fiddles frequently squeak. The analogy is not as false as it appears. Our critic quotes with approval a passage by Brandes about *Henry IV : Part I.*

> No sooner has the rebellion been hatched in the royal palace than the second act opens with a scene in an inn-yard. Some carriers . . . saddle their horses . . . Not a word do they say about Prince Henry or Falstaff. They talk of the price of oats. Their speeches have nothing to do with the action. But seldom in poetry has so much been effected in so few words.

Mr. Pearsall Smith observes that the reader will easily overlook this scene. Of course he will, and must. But at even a tenth-rate performance of *Henry IV* the truth of Brandes's remarks would have knocked our author in the eye, though he had never heard of Brandes.

Mr. Pearsall Smith probably gives the best practical advice available for getting the best out of Shakespeare to-day. But the difficulty is more of the present stage than of Shakespeare's making. Our critic comments on the absurdity of the plots, which unfit, he says, many of the plays for representation. This is doubtful. Shakespeare may have been no great shakes at a plot. But the plot matters more in the closet than on the stage. For though the plot be ramshackle, the play does not often flag at any given moment. There will always be something to look at going on, a murder, a suicide, a drunk, some hectic love-making, a *coup d'état*. The whole thing goes with a rush. For in melodrama the parts are greater than the whole, as no one knew better than Shakespeare.

This is a criticism of Mr. Pearsall Smith's main thesis, as being true only in fact not aesthetically ; and there can be no need to point out that this essay is full of the author's peculiar sensibility and peculiar sub-acid wit. And in certain moods one agrees with nearly everything he says. You can only grasp Shakespeare by silent solitary reading. But if you go on to say that under no circumstances will you put your nose inside a playhouse, you will, like the illiterate playgoer, miss something essential to the matter, unless you can sufficiently visualise the scene and recite the verse, to become, in the library, the ideal producer on your own account. It is amusing to observe Mr. Pearsall Smith more than once slipping into this unexpected role.

CHISELS OF BRONZE

The Technique of Early Greek Sculpture. By STANLEY CASSON. *Oxford University Press.* 25*s.*

In these days when style is supposed to depend directly upon technique, it is a matter of general interest to know that the history of Greek sculpture can be rewritten in terms of changes in technique. From the " modern " standpoint, any merits that archaic sculpture may have possessed ceased to exist after the middle of the fifth century ; in the more-developed fragments of the Parthenon the effect is no longer one of free carving into the block but of copying from a clay model of equal elaboration. The new influence might ultimately have been largely pictorial—in fact it coincides with the first appearance of famous painters—but it is too much to expect a direct imitation of pictorial methods in everyone's carving ; an intermediate stage must be postulated in the case of artists who are not distinguished for virtuosity, and that is the use of a well-finished clay model of considerable size. Now under these conditions the clay model for a marble scarcely differs from one destined to be cast in bronze, and so it has been said that the reason why Greek sculptors fell from grace is that they drew no distinction between a style suitable for carving in stone and one for bronze. It has, however, remained a mystery that the influence of modelling does not become obtrusive till the

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CONSTABLE LONDON W.C.2

Parthenon, though casting in bronze had begun a century earlier. It appears from recent German researches (here first discussed in English) that archaic bronze statues were cast not from a clay model but from a figure carved in wood. This explains why the drapery of the bronze Charioteer at Delphi should have been arranged in a series of smooth parallel grooves, such as could not be produced in clay without enormous labour; in wood nothing could be easier. (On the other hand, the flesh portions of the figure were apparently cast from clay models.) Thus in the archaic period the influence of bronze upon marble sculpture was almost equivalent to that of wood carving and involved little of that deleterious "plastic sense" of which so much has been heard in our time, and which became so obvious in the generation after the Charioteer. Incidentally, I must protest against attributing the invention of the process of hollow-casting to the sixth-century Greeks. It is true that the only existing metal statues from Egypt are composed of sheets of copper riveted together, but these belong to the third millennium; the life-size cats and other large bronze statuettes of later dynasties are hollow-cast. The Greeks might equally well have learnt the process from Asia. The bronze statue of an Elamite queen in the Louvre could not have been produced by any other means, and Sennacherib actually describes the hollow-casting of some colossal bulls: "With great beams and wooden frameworks . . . I fashioned moulds of clay and poured bronze therein." Thus the process had been known for centuries, if not for thousands of years, in Mesopotamia, a country not itself altogether inaccessible to the Greeks, while its influence dominated the intervening countries of Asia Minor and Syria.

Mr. Casson has in many respects corrected previous ideas on the tools used for carving in marble, and he has done great service by demonstrating the Greek reliance upon abrasives (chiefly emery) in the finer points of the carving as well as in the polishing. A series of excellent photographs reveals traces of the sculptors' methods and their effect upon the design; incidentally, he illustrates a number of unfamiliar but enterprising statues and reliefs in better reproductions than were hitherto available. It becomes apparent that one of the turning-points in Greek sculpture was the fitting of abrasives to drills, shortly before 500 B.C. The old method of scraping the stone with a sliver of emery was adopted, as he points out, direct from Egyptian art, and resulted in shallow lines of the same delicacy; the new method produces deep hollows and bold shadows, and thus started the realism of classic drapery and hair. In one matter he may exaggerate the use of abrasion, for he treats it as an adequate though laborious substitute for the sawing said to have been practised by the Minoans and Mycenaeans; I should have thought they would have cut off large masses of stone by inserting wooden wedges into holes and damping them, and then have merely abraded the rough edges. The assertion that the "Minoan" goddess in Cambridge was carved with a steel tool, and therefore is modern, calls for action on the part of the Fitzwilliam, where experiments on the same material should be made with a bronze tool.

A. W. LAWRENCE

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HARD-BITTEN, TWICE SHY

From Flushing to Calvary. By EDWARD DAHLBERG. *Putnam.* 7s. 6d.

The style of this book is too incidental and accidental, too striking and strained. The idiomatic metaphors often strain so much to be what they are not that they often break away and leave the meaning at a loose end: "He clapped his hands to beat the band as he stared at her 14-karat solid-gold tooth tap-dancing before the semicircular footlights of her false white teeth." The quotations and contexts from Genesis have little to do with making richer and more comprehensible the chapters they introduce, even though one of the quotations is an excellent piece of biblical telescope-quoting.

D. H. Lawrence found Mr. Dahlberg's writing in his first book, *Bottom Dogs*, excellent in its almost unbearable, repulsive consciousness. This implies a first-rate excellence which we think Mr. Dahlberg's writing does not show. He strains too hard for an immediate effect to be able to develop a real depth of consciousness in his characters. He presents only surface consciousness. He does so to avoid sentimentality. He would have to change his whole technique in order to present repulsiveness beyond surface ugliness without being artificial or sentimental. (The only novelist of the present-day Americans who can do this superbly well is William Faulkner.)

The most noteworthy characteristic of the book is its common bareness and lack of sentimentality. This tone is well suited to the subject of the book. Lorry's life is hopelessly bitten, becoming too dead to be desperate. There is no plot in this book: there is no plot in such a life. The coupling of a cool hard-surface style with such aimless material achieves a successful leaden-weight emptiness. The most important events in the book—the death of Lorry's mother, or later the communistic parade which Lorry took for a funeral at first, at which he got a police-club scalp wound while picking up a peanut—leave no apparent impression upon the soft pap of Lorry's consciousness. Nor is any impression implied by the admirably spare unsentimental treatment of these events. There are, in the work, no soft-pillow spots and many very jagged sharp edges. But no reader with a head worth keeping should come out with his head cut off.

ROGER WILLIAMS

Roger Williams. By JAMES ERNST. *Macmillan.* 20s.

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the idiom of his time. By virtue of his connection Williams soon found himself regarded as a bright young man by Cromwell and his associates. But his apprenticeship with the middle-class faction was also his inoculation against it. He was impatient of a revolution that would gather the people under its standard until it no longer needed them; that would offer the people phrases until the time came to distribute the advantages of revolution, when it would cease to offer even these.

His open sympathy with the Levellers, as well as his intellectual kinship with their leader, Lillburne, soon made it politic for him to transfer his activities to the new world. The faction headed by Cromwell had a programme; it knew what it wanted, and knew to what extent it might compromise to attain its objective. But the tradition running from the peasant uprisings in the Middle Ages to the Levellers had no programme; it had merely an attitude and faith.

By denying him the prospect of a pleasant life on earth, the Catholic Church had instilled into the average man the faith that he was being saved for something better, and that he was in fact sufficiently important to warrant his being saved. The Church further had supplied him with a highly developed language and with a method for using it. Now with the inevitable return of commercial enterprise, the average man began to be tempted to exercise his importance for purposes other than the emendation of his immortal soul; and, handicapped by a language designed to fit a supernatural frame of reference, he attempted nevertheless to use that language to express his worldly aspirations. Mother Church had always known how to be tolerant of words. Therefore, these heretical movements were permitted a good deal of leeway before the power of Rome was mobilised against them. But they were never stamped out. The antique idea of community had been conceived in a democratic spirit, and the common people, whenever an upstart entered the lists with the powers that were, made common cause with him. During his fight the people filled the ranks of his armies; as soon as he commenced to institute the reforms for which posterity has immortalised him, the people, realising that he really had nothing for them, turned against him, to the advantage of the next opportunist.

The Levellers were the last of the democratic crusaders. Williams gave the tradition that had nurtured them a new orientation by supplying their movement in America with a new terminology; the familiar phrases we have learned to reverence Locke and Rousseau for hammering home, received their baptism at his hands. Now Williams neither knew nor cared about economics. No better than any of his contemporaries could he anticipate the Industrial Revolution. We must not blame him for assuming that the world as he knew it would go on for ever: for our part we find it impossible in our calculations to allow for a future not dominated by machines. As a practical politician, Williams was interested in getting power for the common people, and he recognised in America his golden opportunity. The best politicians are usually thoroughly conservative or thoroughly radical; they concentrate upon fundamental objectives, and, these attained, they can afford to leave matters like free speech to journalists.

Williams saw his chance in a society where neither tradition nor vested interests could come between the common people and the State. He therefore founded Providence, Rhode Island, on a completely democratic basis. Had he attempted this experiment in England either tradition would have engulfed it or he would have been forced to compromise with the rising tide of pseudo-democratic representative government. As it was Providence carried on until the great wave of American expansion sucked it up.

In the meantime, however, Williams had kept alive the popular socio-religious communistic tradition, so that by the time the modern world took possession of his experiment the new technique of economic revolt had a living tradition to lend itself to. In a word, Williams's task was to effect the transition of the radical movement from the Middle Ages to the modern world.

To the significance of this great work it is impossible that so sympathetic and thorough a critic as Mr. Ernst should be impervious. The difficulty with his interpretation, however, is that it evaluates Williams purely in terms of what he did, and not as well in terms of what he set out to do. An occasional hint leads one to believe that Mr. Ernst is not unaware of the shortcomings of his method.

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PROBLEMS OF ANIMAL MIND

The Psychology of Animals. By F. ALVERDES, Professor of Zoology in the University of Marburg. *Kegan Paul.* 9s.

This book is a translation from the German. Its author, Professor Alverdes, who is a zoologist, claims animal psychology as a branch of zoology. Whatever novelty his claim might have disappears when it is made clear that for him animal psychology is not the study of mental process. In his own words: "the question of animal consciousness must be excluded from animal psychology. Not because it is not interesting, but because it is insoluble." The "particular theme" of the book is "the science of the behaviour of animals." Possible misunderstandings might be avoided if these words had appeared in the title.

The reader who expects a detailed account of behaviour reactions will be disappointed. What Professor Alverdes does is to discuss a series of general outstanding problems, beginning with the difference between living and non-living nature and ending with the human being as investigating subject and object of investigation. In the series comes a problem of method: the difference between "understanding" and "explaining" behaviour. It invites comment because it sets one doubting whether in fact Professor Alverdes has succeeded in excluding the "question of consciousness from animal psychology."

The difference between "explaining" and "understanding" is illustrated by the alarm shown by birds when their nest is approached. Their behaviour is "explained" by relating it to its physiological antecedents. Explanation is thus the product of observation and experiment. It places an event or thing in some logical order. That is clear. What is not at first sight so clear is the meaning the author attaches to "understanding." To quote his wording (as translated): he "understands" the bird's alarm behaviour "by sympathy," "through direct human experience." The meaning these expressions convey is that to "understand" the bird's behaviour one must be capable of experiencing more or less the conscious process it experiences, in this case a feeling of alarm. The interpretation is confirmed by another instance: the healthy person's frequent incapacity to "understand" the ailing, in other words, incapacity to experience

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what it is like to be ill. It is confirmed further by the author's statement that "it is only psychical processes—or more correctly their mode of expression—which can be understood." The only meaning I can attach to this is that one understands the mode of expression, the behaviour, by getting behind it to the psychical processes, a proposition which can scarcely be regarded as consistent with the main proposition that the "question of animal consciousness must be excluded from animal psychology."

The inconsistency is not diminished by the author's affirmation that "understanding" is better than "explanation" in so far as it is "able to bring us into a more direct relation to the observed facts." It can obviously do so only if we can be sure that the animal's conscious experience resembles our own. But can we be sure? Professor Alverdes himself says not: "it may be more or less clear to us that a dog, for example, experiences joy or pain. No proof of this can be given . . ." The admission weakens the value of "understanding." It is difficult to see either what rôle the author assigns to it or why he thinks it so important.

There remains the prior question as to whether there is any point in seeking to exclude the question of consciousness from animal psychology. It may be conceded that no complete account of the animal mind can ever be given. On the other hand, it is certain that something can be discovered or "explained" by the usual scientific method of formulating an hypothesis (provisional explanation) and subjecting it to tests. We can test, for example, the common assumption that a bird, in incubating its eggs, is guided by foresight, that it knows its eggs contain its growing chicks, that its long and patient sitting is explained by that knowledge and by its wish to hatch the chicks out. Now if this is true certain other things follow, and among them that the bird will not be indifferent if its eggs are removed and alien objects substituted for them. That is what can be tested. The test has been made with the black-headed gull. The birds' behaviour proved them totally indifferent to any substitution. They sat normally and for several days on tin boxes, golf balls, lumps of coal, anything not too uncomfortable. Such behaviour is clearly inconsistent with the assumption of foresight above stated. It suffices to justify us in dropping the proposed explanation and hunting for one that fits the facts better. Incidentally it illustrates the danger of trying to "understand" an animal's behaviour by assuming resemblance between its mentality and ours. How far the method will carry us we do not know. But that need not prevent us from going ahead.

Only a small part of the matter in the book has here been touched upon. But enough has been said to show that it is likely to be provocative and not the less interesting on that account.

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The Wreck of Reparations. By JOHN W. WHEELER-BENNETT. *Allen and Unwin.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

At a memorable dinner-party not long ago I heard someone say to Mr. Wheeler-Bennett, "I should never have expected *you* to write a book like that." The spokesman, as I afterwards ascertained, meant merely that he thought Reparations a dull, because a dead, subject, while Mr. Wheeler-Bennett suspected an aspersion upon the dilettante impression which his social skill succeeds in conveying. Having now read the book myself, I must hasten to state that I am amazed at the industry which must have gone to this clear and accurate compilation of three such years of world history; as a text-book, once known, it becomes indispensable; it is, into the bargain, admirably documented. And to this, tribute of quite other kinds must be added. Mr. Wheeler-Bennett has a remarkable understanding of world problems, or it might be better to say of the problem of the world. He can tell his story by turns, from Washington, London, Paris, Berlin or Vienna, without losing its essential unity. He can be just without becoming insipid. If the subject *is* dull, the treatment is not.

I had the fortune in 1931 to wander in more or less haphazard fashion from Berlin in July, when the Danat Bank had just collapsed, to Buda-Pest in August, when Count Bethlen resigned in favour of Count Karolyi (surely Julius, not Karl, as Mr. Wheeler-Bennett calls him); on to Vienna in time for Schober's unwilling renunciation of the Austro-German Customs Union on Sept. 3rd, and back to England in time for the abandonment of the Gold Standard. The drama of that year was thus partially brought home to me; ever since I have waited for a worthy narrator, and now not in vain. Mr. Wheeler-Bennett tells this only too exciting story of the "Tornado" of 1931 with a Gibbonian grandeur of style. Nor does he err in an over-academic direction; his genius for personal contacts is getting to be well known, and he can quote the *Herald* as well as the *Times*.

That Europe was rescued at all in 1931 Mr. Wheeler-Bennett attributes largely to the helpful attitude of Great Britain. But Mr. MacDonald's personal triumph at Lausanne in 1932—for, as everyone there said, the Conference was his conference, and it was due to him that the deadlock was overcome—ended in "a first-class diplomatic victory" for France. Mr. Wheeler-Bennett has nothing but disapproval for M. Herriot's achievement in breaking up the British-German-Italian "clean-slate" *bloc* with the Gentlemen's Agreement, "this new product of the united sentimentality of Mr. MacDonald and M. Herriot." If Mr. MacDonald be really so susceptible, what are we to fear from the American invitation to M. Herriot to meet him in the United States now? As a matter of fact, the Nazi Revolution, which has occurred since Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's book was written, would anyhow have driven Great Britain back to France. It also a little invalidates Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's condemnation of the Protocol of Lausanne which provided Austria with a loan of 300 million schillings on the condition of a fresh renunciation of the *Anschluss*. "More and more," he writes, "one is driven back to the wisdom of allowing Austria to consummate in marriage that spiritual union with the German Reich which has existed for the last fourteen years, or, in other words, to make an honest woman of her." To-day many of us might regard this consummation as the sacrifice of Austria to the passion of a rather bad man, while the concealed success of the foreign policy of Herr Stresemann and Dr. Brüning in the French Elections of May 1932—the very month that Brüning fell—has become one of the most tragic of history's ironies.

Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's analysis of American policy is particularly helpful; he does justice to the American contention that if Europe can afford armaments she can afford to pay her debts. But here again events have been moving quickly; the financial crisis and Mr. Roosevelt's popularity have transformed the situation in the last month or so. The crisis was at first thought to have

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softened the sternness of Congress nearly a year after the tardy conversion of the French electorate, while Mr. Roosevelt, as the enemy of America's high tariffs, may be able to make debt concessions in return for tariff treaties. And so perhaps the "Wise Men of Basle" may not have worked in vain. E. W.

SHORTER NOTICES

The School in English and German Fiction. By W. R. HICKS. *Soncino Press.* 6*s.*

With a bibliography of sixteen pages and footnotes at the bottom of every page, this book suffers badly from over-documentation and under-statement. Dr. Hicks's "conclusions" about the differences between pictures of English and German school life seem rather tame. Why English and German, and not French? The influence of Gide is, of course, outside Dr. Hicks's subject, but how can one possibly discuss the psychological novel of school life without considering his *Faux Monnayeurs*? Dr. Hicks gives a brief historical sketch of the English school novel from *Tom Brown* onwards; in Germany, he points out, the school novel did not spring up as a genre of its own, but developed naturally from the main branch of the novel. "There is a definite evolution from *Wilhelm Meister via* the novels of Hölderlin, Jean Paul, Gottfried Keller, Wilhelm Raak, down to 'Lehrerroman' and 'Schülerroman' (schoolmaster novel and schoolboy novel)." The average picture of English schoolboys, he says, emphasises the school, while the German isolates the individual. He points to the introspection of many of the German novels, the greater "seriousness" of the schoolboy, the possibility of suicide. Most people who know anything of England and Germany are aware of these distinctions. Dr. Hicks has produced a useful book of reference for those who are interested in the subject, but he has not made it more than mildly interesting himself.

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"There is no horse so dead that it is not kicking somewhere"; Cyril Connolly's aphorism rings in the mind. Here the horse is the blood-stallion of the naughty 'nineties. It is difficult to read *Dorian Gray* with a straight face nowadays, for what was gloriously wicked has become gloriously comic, and a cruel fate decrees that Mr. Egan should be comic without ever having been allowed to be wicked.

> For the second time that evening those small transparent white hands held his imagination in their soft pink palms, cool, refreshing. Sharp, polished nails dug mercilessly into his heart; soon it would bleed: he wondered if she played the piano.

There is a lot like that, and the illustrations are in every way worthy of the text.

Bel-Ami. By GUY DE MAUPASSANT. Translated by MARJORIE LAURIE. *Werner Laurie.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Translation, probably the worst paid of all literary work, is often also the best done. It is rare now to come across a translation of a French novel which is not easy, accurate and colloquial—as good usually as an original piece of writing. Yet not so many years ago the average English version was horrible to read and ostentatiously foreign, like the bad decoration in a restaurant. Miss Marjorie Laurie's translation of *Bel-Ami*, which appeared first in 1923, is consistently good for a classic (one remembers the outrages committed, even more recently, on Flaubert); and in reprinting at 3*s.* 6*d.* a volume their edition of Maupassant, Messrs. Werner Laurie make it possible to obtain a decent edition of Maupassant's stories at a cheap price. There are ten volumes. Only the novels and stories are included. Why not add *Sur L'Eau*?

The Tinder Box of Asia. By GEORGE E. SOKOLSKY. *Allen and Unwin.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The Soul of Japan. By F. CHALLAYE. *Routledge.* 6*s.*

Twenty Years of the Chinese Republic. By HAROLD ARCHER VAN DORN, Ph.D. *Hurst and Blackett.* 18*s.*

Here are three more books on the Far East, from which readers may get instruction and entertainment. Mr. Sokolsky is an American journalist who has a long and intimate acquaintance with his subject. He deals with the relations of China and Japan with one another, with Russia and the Western Powers. His attitude to the League of Nations is sympathetic but critical, and he is doubtful of its capacity to be the saviour of China. He makes no confident prophecies about the outcome of the struggle with Japan, except that it will be long and severe. China's internal political struggle he sees as essentially one between Nationalism and Communism, a fact which few but Chiang Kai-shek have grasped. Professor Van Dorn is also an American, who has spent some years in China, and gives an interesting account of her progress—political, social, cultural and economic—in the last two decades. Mr. Challaye's book is a slighter sketch of the Japanese qualities, and of the effect on them of European and of Asiatic civilisation. Mr. Challaye believes that Japan is making "a noble effort to strive to reconcile the clear-sighted rational ideas of the Occident with the profound traditional sentiments of Asia," and also that "it might and ought to be the historic mission of Japan to bring together and unite the white and yellow races for the good of humanity." It may be so; but at the moment the prospect looks a trifle Utopian.

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While the total new business is less than 1931 by £240,000 at £8,010,000, the corresponding figures for Great Britain, excluding the Irish Free State, constitute a record at £4,868,000, and it looks at the moment as if this figure will be exceeded in 1933. Upon the continuance of these contracts rest the confidence and happiness of the home life of the policy-holders and their dependents. Ordinary saving can never compete with life assurance.

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The total funds of the Society now amounted to £36,608,000, an increase of some two millions in the year. Taking repayments into account, it was necessary to find a new home for upwards of £2,800,000. This sum had been spread over nearly every classification in the assets. On these investments the Society would obtain a gross yield of £5 8s. 3d. per cent. At December 31, 1931, Stock Exchange securities were at their lowest, and it was thought prudent to write out over £1,000,000 sterling to cover the depreciation. When the present balance-sheet was drawn up it was found that considerably more than the whole of this depreciation had been recovered and was held in reserve.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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THE

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About Motoring

RILEY CARS

THE Riley works have been continuously established as a part of the motor industry for nearly forty years. In their earlier days they were famous for honest materials, good work, and clever design, but never won popular favour, or earned large profits. About 1927 they suddenly stepped into the limelight with their famous Nine, a small car which suddenly rendered every other small car on the market obsolete. Its dimensions were carefully scaled to furnish a magnificent combination of economy with comfort; they never cut their cars so small that the occupants were cramped. Its weight and springing were such that it never leapt about on rough going in chamois fashion, as smaller vehicles were prone to do. It had the first easy-change silent gear box ever commercially produced in these islands. It felt like a big car, and handled with the same steady precision as a big car. Its four forward gears permitted a willing engine to do its best under all road conditions. The speed on third gear ran up to 55 m.p.h., and the engine developed a surprising power for its size. Moreover, the entire chassis from stem to stern was quite unusually durable. In the second year the factory coachbuilder evolved a saloon body—known as the Monaco—which was extremely good-looking, and with the aid of footwells beside an encased propeller-shaft in the rear cockpit furnished very cosy quarters for two well-grown adults astern of the front passengers. This car sold by thousands, and is still quite one of the most popular nines in the world for buyers who want the best, and a durable best at that. During the last seven years it has undergone no substantial alteration, except that the engine revolutions of the standard model have been tamed down a little in the interests of those incautious owners who will flog a willing car until it bursts.

As time went on, a somewhat wealthier stratum of the car-owning public was irresistibly attracted by Riley quality, and the simple addition of two more cylinders of the same size produced the Riley twelve. The process continued, and the duplication of the design on a slightly larger scale begot the fourteen. All three models are now selling freely with a delightful assortment of coachwork, ranging from the open two-seater to the enclosed five-seater. The firm gradually realised the propaganda values of racing, and built some high-speed editions of all its engines. Modified editions of these engines are available for ordinary use with higher compression ratios and multiple carburetters. The "special series" edition of the 12 h.p. saloon will do approximately 72 m.p.h. on its top gear, and achieves this high figure without sacrifice of quietness, docility, or easy riding.

The modern editions bristle with innumerable refinements. High amongst these I would place the simple provision for freeing a jammed starter bendix, and the special handles for tightening either or both brakes on the road without stopping the car. Very few cars equipped with four wheel brakes boast of a single central adjustment by which the owner may reset all his brakes accurately and easily; and I doubt if there is another on the world's market which permits him to perform this usually complicated job while he drives along the road. As yet the firm have not adopted any of the modern transmission systems, though I understand that they are experimenting with three of them. They listed the Salerni transmission for 1933, but are not yet ready to supply it. Presumably their programme was drawn up before the E.N.V. people began supplying the Wilson box as a free-for-all component, or else the designing staff have sound reason to hope that they can shortly standardise something even better; this is difficult to credit. In the meantime, the cars have four "silent" (helical) gears. I have only one complaint against the firm, which is that many years ago they patented their own wire wheel, and they still continue to fit it. It is an excellent wheel in all respects save one, and probably costs them less than a proprietary wheel. But when a wheel has to be changed, I have no love for fumbling with locking nuts between dirty spokes; a wire wheel secured by several nuts should locate these nuts clear of its spokes.

It should be clearly understood that these cars are not built down to a price. Produced by modern systems of factory organisation, they are definitely built for the man who desires to keep a car for several years, and may wish to tackle all his own maintenance problems. Durability and accessibility on these three chassis are considered in terms of the microscope. They are owner-drivers' cars, *par excellence*.

The engine is usually regarded as the heart of a car, and in this case the power unit combines the four main virtues of perfect manners, high power, great economy, and extremely long life. It will not be changed until technical science shows us the way to produce a better engine with similar dimensions; and it was so far ahead in 1927 that it is still at least level with its most ambitious competitor. But I would personally reserve even higher praise for the chassis regarded as a complete unit. I drive all the small cars produced in this country, turn and turn about; and I revert from the wheel of the best of them to a big car with subconscious relief. The small car is prone to fuss, and hop about, and to steer approximately instead of precisely. No such sensations are encountered at the wheel of a Riley; in spite of its modest dimensions it contrives to possess "that big car feel" in an incomprehensible fashion, which probably accounts for its vast popularity. Apart from my little personal spite against the wheel-nuts, I have absolutely no fault of any sort or kind to find with it.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 18.—THE FIFTH FORM AT ST. DERELICT'S

Nare, Dana and Read are three promising boys in the mathematical Fifth. They experience some little difficulty in grasping the rudiments of Probability. To encourage them, their master, Mr. Dean, makes the following offer:

"Here are two blank dice (*i.e.*, small wooden cubes) for you. I want you boys (working in collaboration) to letter the faces of each die with the letters of your names. On one die you will put the consonants of your names, using each consonant at least once; on the other die you will similarly put the vowels of your names.

"When you have done this, you will throw the two dice in the ordinary way, thus obtaining one pair of letters. Then throw the two dice a second time, and place the two letters that now appear so that they follow the pair previously selected. You may arrange the elements of each pair how you like, but the first pair must precede the second pair.

"If the four letters so obtained and arranged spell *Nare* I shall give you 8*s.* to divide between you; if they spell *Dana* I shall give you 5*s.*; if *Read* 7*s.*; and if they spell my own name the reward will be 6*s.*"

How should the boys letter the two dice?

[In the construction of the above problem, as in practically all the current series, I have had the assistance of Wing-Commander Struan Marshall and Mr. S. T. Shovelton. These gentlemen are collaborating with me in *Caliban's Problem Book*, which will be published in the autumn. I shall be glad to hear from solvers who care to write as to what they consider to be our most interesting problems.]

PROBLEM 16.—MEDDLING PRYOR

Mr. Baker is the wainwright.
Mr. Butcher is the driver.
Mr. Carter is the cooper.
Mr. Cooper is the smith.
Mr. Driver is the baker.
Mr. Painter is the butcher.
Mr. Smith is the painter.
Mr. Tinker is the carter.
Mr. Wainwright is the tinker.

I gave one clue more than was strictly necessary, though not enough for one or two solvers.

These "inferential tangles" retain their position as the most popular of my problems. "Meddling Pryor" has attracted perhaps a score of new solvers.

PROBLEM 15.—CARDINAL'S HAT

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to: O. Barraclough, "Ravendale," Regent's Road, Bolton, Lancs.

There were 113 correct and eighteen incorrect solutions.

Five points are awarded for this problem.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM-SOLVERS

One set of Low's cartoons is awarded weekly to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition a record is kept of the names of senders of all correct solutions submitted. All solvers qualify for book prizes on a cumulative-point basis. For particulars see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of December 24th.

Solutions to the current problem must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen Street, London, W.C.2, and must reach this office not later than the next Tuesday but one after the date of publication.

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A Course of three Lectures (in German) on "DIE LEHRE VOM TRAGISCHEN UND DIE TRAGODIEN DER WELTLITERATUR" will be given by PROFESSOR OSKAR WALZEL (Professor of German Language and Literature in the University of Bonn), at KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON (Strand, W.C.2), on MAY 4th, 9th and 11th, at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by Professor H. G. Atkins, D.Litt., M.A. (Professor of German in the University).

A Course of Three Lectures on "THE NEW TENDENCIES OF MODERN CONSTITUTIONS" will be given (in French), by Professor B. MIRKINE-GUETZEVITCH (Secretary-General of the International Institute of Public Law, Paris), at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2), on May 9th, 10th and 11th at 5 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by Professor Sir MAURICE S. AMOS, K.B.E., M.A., K.C. (Quain Professor of Comparative Law in the University).

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FOUR LECTURES on "HEALTH AND INDUSTRY," illustrated with lantern slides, will be delivered by Sir GEORGE NEWMAN, K.C.B., M.D., D.C.L., on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th May, 1933, at Gresham College, Basinghall Street, E.C.2, at six o'clock. Admission free.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

THE BUDGET—WHAT AMERICAN DEVALUATION MEANS—THE PRICE LEVEL AND THE PRICE OF GOLD—NEW ISSUES

"HE was only a beer-drinker's Chancellor and he wouldn't take a chance" was the vulgar comment heard in the City on Wednesday. The market in gold shares was the only one which reacted favourably to Mr. Chamberlain's budget speech. Rightly or wrongly, the increase in the resources of the Exchange Equalisation Fund was regarded as a guarantee that a devaluation of the American dollar is not to be allowed to depress the sterling price of gold. We are not convinced that Mr. Chamberlain could not have taken 6*d.* off the income tax without unbalancing the budget. The cost of a 6*d.* relief would be only about £21 millions on our estimates. He had a windfall in the depreciation fund formerly attached to the 5 per cent. War Loan, which amounted to £10 millions; he had also a free surplus of £17,291,000, a total of over £27 millions. Surely he could have relieved the income taxpayer by £21 millions and allowed for a fall of £6 millions in the beer revenue on the present basis. Brewery shares, which had already discounted their relief, reacted. If the quality of beer is improved and the price reduced the brewers will have to wait upon an increase in consumption to obtain any benefit for their shareholders. The home railway market was disappointed that the Chancellor is not taxing the heavy road vehicles on the scale proposed in the Salter Committee Report. As for the gilt-edged market, there was no "bull" point to be derived from the budget speech except that sterling is to be protected by the Exchange Equalisation Fund. Thus, no increase in interest rates need be expected. The policy of cheap money continues. So much is to the good, but what good *is* cheap money if it is not used?

* * *

International juggling is so common in these days of depression that a deliberate devaluation of the American dollar, if it comes, should surprise or shock no one. The French will object that America with its huge stock of gold (over $4,000 millions) and favourable balance of payments has none of the claims to devaluation which belonged to France in 1926. The British will point out that America had not the excuse for abandoning the gold standard which Great Britain had in 1931—a flight of foreign capital and an adverse balance of trade. Nor will it be forgotten that Great Britain fought to preserve her financial honour, borrowing £130 millions from France and America in support of the £, and refused to suspend gold payments until she had less than sufficient gold to cover her Franco-American gold loans. There is no doubt that America could have remained on the gold standard: there is no doubt that the selling pressure on the dollar at Easter time, which was taken as an excuse for suspending gold payments, emanated from New York. But while there is as little honour among adherents of the gold standard as there is among thieves, we would not accuse America of deliberately abandoning gold to spite Great Britain and other countries trading with depreciated currencies. President Roosevelt's hand was forced by his domestic situation. The inflationist party had the majority in both Houses of Congress, and the President was plainly told that his Farm Relief Bill would not be passed unless he agreed to an inflationist amendment. To recover his leadership Mr. Roosevelt submitted to the proposal of dictatorial money powers.

* * *

The inflationist amendment to the Farm Bill authorises the President (1) to expand credit by $3,000 millions by the purchase of Government bonds by the Reserve Banks, (2) to reduce the gold content of the dollar (up to 50 per cent.), and (3) to accept a certain quantity of silver as part payment of war debts and to issue one dollar silver certificates against such silver payments. Now it is quite possible that if the American people anticipate inflation with such keenness that they rush frantically out of idle money into commodities and the equity shares of commodity producers, commodity and security prices will rise so steeply that no inflation of the currency will be necessary. The business indices are already better (this is in part a seasonal improvement), and if stock market profits are widely made and spent retail trade will expand, more motor cars will be used, and manufacturing activity will gradually increase. But we believe that devaluation is the part of the inflation programme which will be forced upon President Roosevelt. What the American Government has to face is a revolt of debtors, and the debtors demand not only a rise in prices but a writing-down of debts. Indeed, a depreciation of the dollar in terms of gold currencies makes matters worse for the debtors if the law is not altered. Some $1,000 millions of American bonds and mortgages were issued with "gold" clauses specifying payment in so much weight of gold. Are the debtors to be requested to pay their creditors not only in full but at a premium? Ask the Middle West. The only way out is a reduction in the gold content of the dollar from the old rate of 23.22 grains of fine gold, and an alteration in the law of the land. A 20 per cent. devaluation is suggested.

* * *

Let us consider what effect a 20 per cent. devaluation of the dollar would have upon (*a*) the exchanges, (*b*) the price of gold, and (*c*) the commodity price level. As regards the currencies remaining on gold, 25 per cent. more dollars would be required to buy 100 francs, 100 florins, etc., than were required at the old gold parities. But because the pre-devaluation rate of exchange for dollars into pounds was 3.44, it does not follow that the new rate of exchange would be 4.30. The pound is off gold and the rate of exchange between pounds and other currencies must be determined ultimately by the relative price levels or internal cost levels. America has reduced its costs to a greater extent than Great Britain, where the level of wages is not so exposed to entrepreneur pressure. A dearer rate for pounds than 3.44 would not, therefore, be justified. If, then, the same rate of exchange between pounds and dollars obtained after the dollar devaluation as before, the sterling price of gold would advance by 25 per cent. That is, gold would be quoted at £7½ per ounce as against £6. If, however, by some miserable agreement or "deal" between the statesmen, a rate of exchange of 4 dollars to the pound were fixed after the 20 per cent. devaluation of the dollar, the sterling price of gold would be £6 9*s.* Again, if the dollar were devalued by only 15 per cent., and a rate of four dollars to the pound were fixed, the sterling price of gold would be £6 1*s.* 5*d.* per ounce, assuming always that other gold currencies were devalued with the dollar, as seems likely. This is perhaps the worst which may happen to the gold producer—a stabilised "gold premium" of 36*s.* 5*d.* per ounce, as against the present premium of 35*s.* per ounce.

(1) Dollar at old parity—
$20.67 = 1 oz. of gold = approx. £6 at 3.44 to £.

(2) Dollar at 20% devaluation—
$25.837 = 1 oz. of gold = approx. £7½ at 3.44 to £.
or £6 9*s.* at 4.00 to £.

(3) Dollar at 15% devaluation—
$24.32 to 1 oz. of gold = approx. £7 1*s.* at 3.44 to £.
= or £6 1*s.* 5*d.* at 4.00 to £.

As for the price level, devaluation does not automatically raise American prices; but if it is interpreted by consumers as a signal to buy, if the psychology of the American is changed from depression to bullishness, the American price level *will* be raised. Nothing lifts prices so quickly as the fear on the part of consumers that they will be higher to-morrow if they do not buy to-day. As for the world price level, it comes to this: that if the dollar depreciates in relation to sterling exactly in proportion to the rise in American prices, "sterling" prices may be unaffected: if it depreciates more than is proportionate, "sterling" prices may be pulled down; but if it depreciates less than is proportionate, sterling prices may be raised. Therefore we see great wisdom in a quick stabilisation of currencies (a provisional one, if you like) with a pegged rate of exchange, as between dollars and pounds, of something near to the pre-devaluation rate of 3.44. Then we can cheer the rise in American prices, confident that sterling prices will be hoisted as well.

* * *

If the reduction in the stamp duty from £1 per cent. to 10*s.* per cent. leads to an increase in public issues, we must watch the company promoters carefully. A curious issue was made this week of 240,000 ordinary shares of 5*s.* in London United Grocers, Ltd. Profits are shown to be declining, while the six months' trading to September 30th, 1932, the less profitable half of the year, resulted in a loss slightly larger than the loss in the corresponding period of the previous year. It is estimated that when the business has been reorganised it will be possible to show earnings of 6 per cent. on the share capital. The directors (other than the managing-directors) are to receive no fees until 6 per cent. is paid, and earned, on the ordinary shares. When divisible earnings reach 10 per cent. the directors are entitled to additional remuneration at the high rate of 5 per cent. of the total profits. No mention is made of any profit-sharing by the employees. This seems to be a speculation upon good management in which the managers take none of the risks.

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Daily Telegraph:—The general impression made by these executants was highly creditable to the students and their instructors. Tone appears to be the object of special care at this institution, and every performer showed that he had well mastered the secret of obtaining both full and sweet tones from his instrument.

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SCHOLARSHIPS

MILL HILL SCHOOL, N.W.7.

Entrance Scholarships.

An examination will be held on the 25th May, 1933, when several Entrance Scholarships will be offered for competition to candidates who are over 12 and under 14 years of age on 1st April, 1933. The value of the Scholarships varies between a nominal sum and a maximum of £100 per annum according to, (1) the financial position of the boy's parents, (2) the standard of the boy's attainments. Two of the Scholarships at least, however, are of a minimum value of £80 per annum. Valuable Ministerial Exhibitions are also offered for the sons of Christian Ministers.

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For further information and application forms, apply to the BURSAR, Mill Hill School, N.W.7.

KING'S SCHOOL, Bruton, Somerset. An examination will be held on June 27th, 28th and 29th for three Open Scholarships of £40, £35 and £30 and several Exhibitions. For particulars apply to the HEADMASTER. The Annual fees are £114 (inclusive).

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